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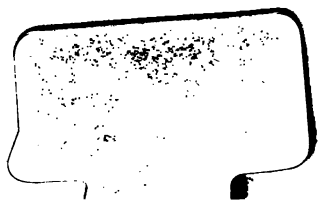
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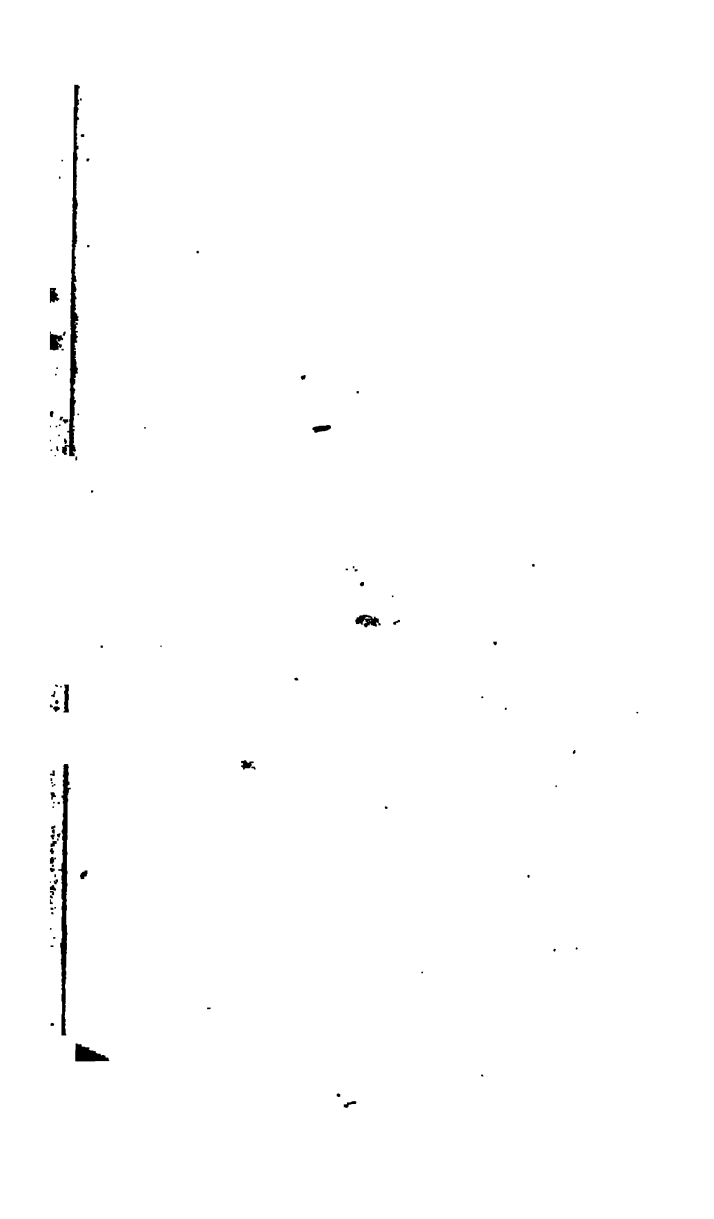
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# SKETCHES.

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PART I.

JOSEPH LANCASTER,  
AND HIS COTEMPORARIES.

PART II.

WILLIAM ALLEN,  
HIS LIFE AND LABOURS.



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HENRY DUNN.

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LONDON:

HOULSTON AND STONEMAN, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
AND CHARLES GILPIN, BISHOPSGATE STREET.

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1848.

*Price One Shilling.*

LONDON:

J. RIDER, PRINTER, 14, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

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It is right to state, that these biographical sketches have already appeared, although in a somewhat different form, in the Eclectic Review. They are taken from articles written for that journal, at the request of the editor, in the years 1845 and 1848.





# **PART I.**

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**JOSEPH LANCASTER AND HIS  
COTEMPORARIES.**



## CHAP. I.

### THE FOUNDER.—JOSEPH LANCASTER.

JOSEPH LANCASTER was born in Kentstreet, Southwark, on the 27th of November, 1778. His father was a Chelsea pensioner, who had served in the British army during the American war. To the pious example and early instruction of his parents he always attributed, under the divine blessing, any acquaintance he possessed with the power of religion. ‘My first impressions,’ he says, ‘of the beauty of the christian religion were received from their instructions.’ There is something characteristic in his own account of himself as a little child, retiring to a corner, repeating the name of Jesus, and as often reverently bowing to it. ‘I seemed to feel,’ he says, ‘that it was the name of one I loved, and to whom my heart performed reverence. I departed from my retirement well satisfied with what I had been doing, and I never remembered it but with delight.’ This little incident was an epitome of the man, and, inconsistent as it may seem to be with his future religious profession as a mem-

ber of the Society of Friends, it truly shadowed forth the enthusiastic, not to say passionate feeling, which through life so eminently characterized him.

At the early age of eight years he was pondering the Gospels in secret retirement and delight, his heart 'filled with love and devotion,' with 'breathings of good will to the human race,' and with 'desires to devote his life to the service of God.' At fourteen, Clarkson's Essay on the Slave Trade came in his way, and alone, and without taking counsel of any one, he determined to go to Jamaica, to teach the poor Blacks to read the word of God.

'With a view to accomplish his purpose, he left home for Bristol, without the knowledge of his parents, having only a bible, Pilgrim's Progress, and a few shillings in his pocket. The first night he slept under a hedge, and the next under a hay-stack. On his journey he fell in with a mechanic, who was likewise going to Bristol. They walked together; and as Joseph's money was all expended, his companion sustained him. On arriving at his destination, he was pennyless, and almost shoeless. He entered himself as a volunteer, and was sent to Milford Haven the next morning. On board he was at first the object of much ridicule, and was contemptuously styled *parson*. The captain

being absent one day, the officers asked him if he would preach them a sermon. He replied, 'Yes; if you will give me leave to go below for half an hour to read my bible.' They said, 'O certainly, an hour if you choose.' When he came up there was a cask placed upon deck, and the ship's company were all assembled. Having placed him upon the cask, he proceeded to lecture them upon their habits of profane swearing and drunkenness, at first much to their mirth and amusement; but after a little they began to droop their heads, when he told them if they would leave off these wretched practices, repent, and turn to the Lord, they might still be happy here and happy hereafter. After this sermon he was treated kindly—no one was suffered to laugh at him, or use him ill, during the three weeks he remained on board.

'His return home to his parents was occasioned as follows:—a dissenting minister at Clapham, happening to call in at his mother's shop, found her weeping, and in great distress. On his kindly asking the cause, she informed him that her child had left home, and she knew not what was become of him. He endeavoured to pacify and comfort her, with the hope that the Lord would restore him to her; and then inquired where *she* thought he was gone. She replied, 'Why

we think to the West Indies. He has felt much and talked much about the poor Blacks lately, from having read Mr. Clarkson's book about them.' 'O come, my good woman,' he rejoined, 'take comfort. I am intimate with the captain of the Port Admiral's ship, at Plymouth. I live at Clapham. Should you hear of your son, let me know.' In about three weeks a letter was received from Joseph; his parents informed the minister; he wrote to the captain; and Joseph was soon sent home with a new suit of clothes, money in his pocket, and his carriage paid by coach.'

Between this period and that of his attaining the age of eighteen, he seems to have been an assistant at two schools, one a boarding, the other a day school; and thus, as he afterwards stated, he became acquainted with all the defects attendant on the old system of tuition in both kinds of schools. At eighteen he commenced teaching on his own account in his father's house, and the following description of the undertaking is from his own pen:—

'The undertaking was begun under the hospitable roof of an affectionate parent; my father gave the school-room rent free, and, after fitting up the forms and desks myself, I had the pleasure, before I was eighteen, of having near ninety children

under instruction, many of whom I educated free of expense. As the number of scholars continued to increase, I soon had occasion to rent larger premises.

‘A season of scarcity brought the wants of poor families closely under my notice: at this time a number of very liberal persons enabled me to *feed* the hungry children. In the course of this happy exertion, I became intimately acquainted with the state of many industrious poor families, whose necessities had prevented the payment of the small price of their children’s tuition, some of whom had accumulated arrears for many weeks. In every such case I remitted the arrears, and continued the children’s instruction free of expense.

‘The state of the poor, combined with the feelings of my mind, had now blended the pay school with a free school. Two benevolent private friends had been in the habit of paying for five or six poor children at the low price I had fixed as the assize of education or mental bread for my neighbourhood. I easily induced these friends to place the money they gave, *as pay*, in the form of a subscription.’

On the outside of his school-room he placed the following printed notice:—‘All that will may send their children and have them educated freely; and those that do not wish to



have education for nothing, may pay for it if they please.' This filled his school; but, as might have been expected, left his income scarcely adequate to his own board and comfort.

As the number of his pupils increased, a new school-room became necessary. It was provided, chiefly through the benevolent aid of the late Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville, 'who,' says Lancaster, 'appeared to be sent by Providence to open wide before me the portals of usefulness for the good of the poor.' 'The children,' he adds, 'now came in for education like flocks of sheep; and the number so greatly increased, as to place me in that state which is the mother of invention. The old plan of education, in which I had been hitherto conversant, was daily proved inadequate to the purposes of instruction on a large scale. In every respect *I had to explore a new and untrodden path.* My continual endeavours have been happily crowned with success.'

Such was his position in 1798. A thousand children were daily gathering for instruction, and a few friends were supporting him by their annual subscriptions. Nothing can be more beautiful than the account given of his position and character at this time. He was always domesticated with his pupils. In their play hours he was their companion

and their friend. He accompanied them in bands of two, three, and (on one occasion) of five hundred at once, to the environs of London for amusement and instruction.

Nor did he care only for their intellectual necessities. Distress and privation were abroad: he raised contributions, went to market, and between the intervals of school presided at dinner with sixty or eighty of the most needy of his flock. 'The character of benefactor he scarce thought about; it was absorbed in that of teacher and friend. On Sunday evenings he would have large companies of pupils to tea, and after mutually enjoying a very pleasant intercourse, would conclude with reading a portion of the sacred writings in a reverential manner. Some of the pupils would vary the exercise occasionally by reading select pieces of religious poetry, and their teacher would at times add such advice and observations as the conduct of individuals, or the beauty and importance of the subject, required. Is it any wonder that with pupils so trained, to whom so many endearing occasions presented, evidences should abound of affection, docility, and improvement? In them he had many ready co-operators, and, however incapable of, forming designs, never were agents more prompt and willing to execute.' These were his best and most joyous days. Happy would

it have been for him, though certainly not for mankind, had he never emerged from this scene of humble, quiet, usefulness, into the turbulence of a world which distracted him by its excitement, injured him by its praise, and finally cast him off, for faults of which itself had been the parent.

He was now rapidly becoming an object of public attention. His school-room was visited by 'foreign princes, ambassadors, peers, commoners, ladies of distinction, bishops, and archbishops;' his publications were passing rapidly through editions, each larger than its predecessor; his school, ably and zealously conducted by youths trained under his own eye, and imbued with his own enthusiastic spirit, was forsaken for lectures in all the principal towns of the kingdom, in every part of which he was received with the most marked and flattering attentions from all classes; even the monarch did not disdain to admit him, uncovered, to his presence, but sustained, encouraged, and applauded him. The interview which took place at Weymouth, in 1805, is thus described by Mr. Corston:—

‘On entering the royal presence, the king said, ‘Lancaster, I have sent for you to give me an account of your system of education, which I hear has met with opposition. One *master* teach five hundred children at the

same time! How do you keep them in order, Lancaster?' Lancaster replied, 'Please thy majesty, by the same principle thy majesty's army is kept in order—by the word of command.' His majesty replied, 'Good, good; it does not require an aged general to give the command; one of younger years can do it.' Lancaster observed that in his schools the teaching branch was performed by youths, who acted as monitors. The king assented, and said, 'Good.' Lancaster then described his system; and he informed me that they all paid great attention, and were highly delighted; and as soon as he had finished, his majesty said, 'Lancaster, I highly approve of your system, and it is my wish that every poor child in my dominions should be taught to read the bible; I will do any thing you wish to promote this object.'

'Please thy majesty,' said Lancaster, 'if the system meets thy majesty's approbation, I can go through the country and lecture on the system, and have no doubt, but in a few months I shall be able to give thy majesty an account where ten thousand poor children are being educated, and some of my youths instructing them.' His majesty immediately replied, 'Lancaster, I will subscribe £100 annually; and,' addressing the queen, 'you shall subscribe £50, Charlotte; and the

princesses, £25 each;' and then added, 'Lancaster, you may have the money directly.' Lancaster observed, 'Please thy majesty, that will be setting thy nobles a good example.' The royal party appeared to smile at this observation; but the queen observed to his majesty, 'How cruel it is that enemies should be found who endeavour to hinder his progress in so good a work.' To which the king replied, 'Charlotte, a good man seeks his reward in the world to come.' Joseph then withdrew.'

At this time money appeared to him to be flowing in, in a perpetual stream. Unaccustomed to its management, and ignorant of its value, he expended it with thoughtless profusion, if not with sinful extravagance. He was, in fact, at this period in so high a state of excitement as to be totally unfit to manage his pecuniary affairs. 'The day after to-morrow,' he writes from the country to a friend, 'is my birth-day. I am nine and twenty. I wish *all my children* to have a plum pudding and roast beef; do order it for them, and spend a happy hour in the evening with them, as thou didst this time last year, in my absence in Ireland; *furnish them with money*, and when the good Samaritan comes again he will repay thee.' And so he went on; yet, as might be expected, not without many *severe trials* and struggles.

A faithful and valued friend, still living, who never forsook him either in evil report or good report, and to whom he was largely indebted through life for pecuniary aid, has related to us his own singular introduction to him, which took place about this time. Having heard of Lancaster and his system, he says, 'I called at his school to enquire about the training of a teacher, and after some conversation, relating to the necessary arrangements for the man's attendance, I slipped a ten-pound note into his hand as an acknowledgment of my obligations. What was my astonishment to see this quiet man, with whom I had a moment before been calmly conversing, at once turn pale, tremble, stand fixed as a statue, and then, flinging himself upon my shoulder, burst into a flood of tears, exclaiming, 'Friend, thou knewest it not, but God hath sent thee to keep me from a gaol, and to preserve my system from ruin !'

And this was the state in which he lived for years—excited, enthusiastic, the creature of impulse and passion—his zeal 'eating him up,' his judgment weak and oftentimes perverted. His letters to his friend Corston, without doubt, faithfully reveal the 'inner man,' and they are always excited, imaginative, and passionate, sometimes enlivened by a *tinge of humour* oddly contrasting with

depression and melancholy. The alternations of hope and fear in his mind are here seen to be rapid and powerful. Yesterday, 'bile, fatigue, and grief overwhelm' him; to-day, he has 'the valley of Achor for a door of hope.' At one time, the 'iron hand of affliction and sorrow is upon him,' and he is 'throwing himself at the footstool of his Saviour and his God, pleading his promises, pleading his fulness, pleading his wants, and *there* resolving to succeed or perish.' At another time he is exalted, 'telling the high and mighty ones that the decree of heaven hath gone forth, that the poor youth of these nations shall be educated, and it is out of the power of man to reverse it.' One day, he is 'peaceful and resigned,' feeling that he is 'sent into the world to do and to suffer the will of God,' and welcoming 'sufferings and the cross as the path the Saviour trod.' The next he is shouting, 'victory, victory, the enemies are amazed and confounded; the stout-hearted are spoiled; they have slept their sleep; none of the men of might have found their hands; the Lord hath cast the horse and his rider into a deep sleep.'

To his enthusiastic and imaginative temperament things innumerable present themselves as 'signal interferences.' He 'wonders at Providence' every step he takes. His *friends will see* 'wonders next spring.' The

invisible power of God goes through him 'far more sensibly than the circulation of blood through his veins.' He is at Dover, and after attending two public meetings on education, holds a private conference with a select party; serious conversation takes place; 'a solemn covering' comes over them,—'it seemed a power almost apostolic.' After standing an hour amongst them, he closes with solemn prayer, 'going boldly to the throne of grace, in the sacred and powerful name of Jesus.'

He carries the same spirit into the world with him, and applies it, without discrimination, to his pecuniary circumstances. He is pressed for money, but he cannot believe that 'if the Almighty has designed the education of the poor of London, a few poor pitiless creditors can prevent it;' only let the eyes of his friends be opened, and they will see 'the mountain full of horses of fire, and of chariots of fire, round about Elijah.' He is in 'watch and ward,' arrested for debt, and in a spunging-house; he has been there three days, and no one has been to see him; but he is 'as happy as Joseph was in the king's prison in Egypt.' Corston visits him, and stays an hour or two with him. 'After his departure—

'He rang for the sheriff's officer, to take *him to the Bench*, but obtained leave to call



at home on their way thither. When he got home his wife and child, and all his young monitors, were assembled, overwhelmed with grief, because he was going to prison. After being with them a little, he opened the parlour door, and said to the man, 'Friend, when I am at home I read the Scriptures to my family; hast thou any objection to come in?' He replied, 'No, sir,' and went in. After he had read a chapter or two, he went to prayer. The man soon became deeply affected, and joined the common grief. After prayer the man returned into the other room, and Joseph in a few minutes said to him, 'Now, friend, I am ready for thee.' They had not gone many paces from the door, when the man said, 'Sir, have you got no friend to be bound for you for this debt?' Joseph replied, 'No, I have tried them all.' 'Well,' replied the man, 'then I'll be bound for you myself, for you are an honest man, I know.' He surrendered him at the King's Bench, and they took his security for the debt. 'About ten o'clock the next morning,' says Mr. Corston, 'he came jumping into my warehouse, Ludgate-hill, saying, 'Ah, friend William, did I not tell thee that thou wast not to assist me this time?'

This arrest brought matters to a crisis. *A friendly docket* was struck against him,

and his creditors were called together. The result was, that in 1808 his affairs were transferred to trustees, a fixed sum was allowed for his private expenses, a correct account of all receipts and expenditure was for the first time kept; and shortly after an association was formed, originally entitled 'The Royal Lancasterian Institution for promoting the Education of the Children of the Poor,' and subsequently, for the sake of greater simplicity, comprehension, and brevity, THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Lancaster's affairs were now transferred to trustees, but the man remained unchanged. He was still the victim of his impulses. The excitement of his mind never subsided. The repression of his extravagance was to him an intolerable interference. One by one he quarrelled with his friends; then separated himself from the institution he had founded; commenced a private boarding school at Tooting; became still more deeply involved; went through the *Gazette*; and finally, wearied with strife and sorrow, sailed in the year 1818 for the new world.

For the few subsequent notices of his life and character we are indebted to a manuscript communication from himself, which has been kindly placed in our hands, in order to enable us to complete the sketch we have undertaken.

On his arrival in the States he was everywhere welcomed and honoured as the friend of learning and of man. His lectures were numerous attended, and, for a time, all appeared to go well with him. But his popularity rapidly decayed. Rumours of debt and of discreditable pecuniary transactions in England soon followed him; sickness, severe and long-continued, wasted his family; and poverty, with her long train of ills, overtook him. Under these circumstances he was advised to try a warmer climate, and an opening having presented itself in Caraccas, he was assisted by his friends to proceed thither. He went with his son-in-law and daughter, (who afterwards settled in Mexico,) and, to use his own words, 'was kindly received, promised great things, honoured with the performance of little ones,' and—after expressing, in no measured terms, his indignation at the breach of all the promises made to him—was glad to leave his family, and escape with his life. This was accomplished by a hasty flight into the interior, from whence he subsequently reached the sea shore, and embarked in a British vessel bound for St. Thomas.

During his stay in Caraccas he had entered a second time into the marriage state, and his account of the performance of the *ceremony* is curious, as being probably the

only instance yet on record of a quaker wedding in South America.

The party met in Lancaster's school-room. At the time appointed General Bolivar, with his leading officers and a large party of gentry and merchants, assembled. 'Bolivar's suite,' he says, 'were extremely puzzled at the large maps, some busying themselves with looking for Caraccas in Asia and in Africa. The ceremony commenced by the whole party being requested to sit in silence. After a time this was broken by a notary, reciting the names and connexions of the parties, and proclaiming that each had promised, in the fear of God, to take the other 'for better or worse, for richer or poorer,' and so on. The witnesses set their hands and seals to the contract; Bolivar signified his approval, and the marriage was regarded by all parties as binding.'

After a short stay at Santa Cruz and St. Thomas, where again his lectures were attended by the governor and the gentry of the island, he returned to Philadelphia. Again sickness overtook him, and poverty, and much sorrow. In miserable lodgings, with an apparently dying wife, pinched by want, and pressed hard by difficulties of every kind, he appealed to the benevolent, and, in addition to other aid, obtained a vote of 500 dollars from the corporation of New

York. This enabled him to take a small house, and to recover strength.

He now determined to return to England, and all but agreed for his passage, when circumstances induced him to return through Canada. On his arrival at Montreal he commenced his lectures, and again for a time floated along the stream of popular favour. His worldly circumstances improved, and he determined to give up the thought of returning to England, and to settle in Canada. After a time, and probably through his own folly, he again sank, and then opened a private school for subsistence. In this school-room he held 'silent meetings' on 'first days,' sitting alone, while his wife and family were gone to church. 'Here,' he touchingly says, 'I sometimes found the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the everlasting hills, resting indeed on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separated from his brethren,' by distance, by faults, by circumstances, and by the just but iron hand\* of discipline. 'I longed again and again to come more and more under the purifying and baptizing power of the truth which had been the dew of my youth, and

\* He had been disowned by 'the Friends' chiefly on account of his irregularities in money matters.

the hope of all my life in its best moments, whether of sorrow or of joy.'

The last letter received from him was addressed to Mr. Corston, from New York, and dated 21st of 9th month, 1838. He was then in the enjoyment of an annuity which had been raised for him in England, chiefly by the exertions of the friend to whom we have already referred. His mind at this time was evidently as wild as ever, and his energies unbroken. He is still ready to undertake 'to teach ten thousand children in different schools, not knowing their letters, all to read fluently in three weeks to three months.' The 'fire that kindled Elijah's sacrifice' has kindled his, and 'all true Israelites' will, in time, see it. And so he runs on.

But his career was rapidly drawing to a close. He had fully resolved on a voyage to England; but about a week before the affecting accident occurred which occasioned his death, he expressed some doubts on the subject, saying, 'He knew not the reason, but he could not see his way clear in leaving America.'

On the 23d of October, 1838, he was run over in the streets of New York; his ribs were broken, and his head very much lacerated. He was immediately taken to the house of a friend, where he died 'without a struggle, in the fifty-first year of his age.'

## CHAP. II.

### THE RIVAL.—DR. BELL.

‘ANDREW, the son of Alexander and Margaret Bell, was born,’ says Dr. Southey, ‘in the city of St. Andrews, on the 7th of March, 1753.’ His father was a barber, and evidently of no mean reputation. ‘Persons are still living who remember him hastening through the street with a professor’s wig, ready dressed, in each hand, his arms at half stretch to prevent their collision. After trimming one professor, he would sit down and breakfast with him, and then away to trim and breakfast with another; his appetite, like his mouth (and his mind also), being of remarkable and well-known capacity.’ Being a man of ability, he added to his original trade that of a clock and watchmaker, and ultimately became baillie of the city, quelling, on one occasion, a popular tumult by his personal influence, after all other means had failed.

The future doctor was his second son; a plodding, industrious boy, fond of his books, but hating school, on account of the tyranny which he witnessed and endured. ‘Oh, it was terrible;’ he said, ‘the remains of feudal severity. I never went to school without

trembling; I could not tell whether I should be flogged or not.'

In 1769 Andrew matriculated at the college, eking out his scanty resources by private teaching. Dr. Wilkie, who was at that time the Professor of Natural Philosophy, particularly noticed him. 'Mind what I say,' Wilkie would say to him, laying his hand on his head, and stroking it; 'pursue your studies, and they will make your fortune. *I never knew a man fail of success in the world if he excelled in one thing.*' This excellent piece of advice can scarcely be impressed too frequently or too forcibly on young men. 'Dr. Bell,' says his biographer, 'adhered to it in his latter years too literally and too long.'

In the year 1774, having finished his education, he embarked for America, where, for the next five years, he appears to have been chiefly employed in tuition. In 1779 we find him a private tutor in the family of a wealthy merchant in Virginia, enjoying a salary of £200 a year, and, in accordance with what afterwards proved the ruling passion of his life, occupied at the same time in obtaining money, by collecting debts and other transactions in business. 'This part of his journal,' says the editor, 'is filled with memoranda of dealings in American currency and tobacco.'

In 1781 he set sail for England. The voyage was disastrous. Nine days after



leaving York, the brig went on shore in lat.  $45^{\circ}$ . His journal of this event is brief, but graphic :—‘ An uninhabited country ; the cold and frost so intense that all safety is despaired of. Almost continual snow. Terrible prospect. Revised my accounts ; and, in expectation of death, devised what I had in my pocket-book, if human being should ever come this way. Snow for sixteen hours. Fair night, and most intensely cold. Observation  $45^{\circ} 50'$ . A fisher’s tent seen in ruins to the south-west.’

Providentially, the severity of the weather abated ; a small boat passed along shore, and ultimately, after eighteen days’ suffering, they reached Halifax in safety ; where, ‘ after a week of good weather,’ he goes to church, and notes it down in his diary, ‘ infinitely superior to the meeting.’ Here he embarked afresh, and in due time reached England in safety.

After remaining in London about five weeks, where, he says, ‘ sight-seeing and coach hire’ cost him sometimes ‘ a guinea a day,’ he visited Bath and Bristol, and then proceeded to Scotland, making his way ‘ sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, and sometimes by stage or other conveyance.’ With the startling exception of a duel which he fought with an English student, and in which he endangered the lives of the seconds *rather than* that of his antagonist, his visit

appears to have been passed tranquilly in the society of his old friends and acquaintances, and in the education of two Virginian youths who had been committed to his care.

About this time Dr. Berkeley (son of the bishop), with whom he had become acquainted at St. Andrews, 'encouraged him to take orders in the English church, and promised to render him all the good offices in his power.' By the aid of this kind and zealous friend he soon obtained ordination, and was shortly after elected minister of the Episcopal Chapel at Leith.

Dissatisfied with this position, and seeing no prospect of preferment, he now determined, by the advice of his friends, to go to India, thinking that 'he might turn his talents and acquirements to good account as a philosophical lecturer, and in the way of tuition.' Dr. Southey states that an influential friend (Mr. Dempster) 'omitting nothing that could contribute to Mr. Bell's success in India, thought it fitting that he should be dignified, before he went out, with a doctor's degree, and accordingly applied for one to the University of St. Andrews.' But from a letter addressed by Mr. Bell to Principal M'Cormick, which has recently been published in a Scotch newspaper, and of the existence of which his biographer was probably ignorant, it appears that the application

was his own. 'I think it an object of considerable importance,' he says, 'to be distinguished with the honourable title of D.D.' And then he begs that it may be done as soon as possible, stating that his father has directions about the fees; and adding, with characteristic vanity, 'My mind is above my fortune and above my birth.' To his surprise and disappointment, the diploma granted was that of M.D., a designation of questionable value to one who had neither pursued nor studied the art of medicine.

On the 2nd of June, 1787, he reached Madras, where his reception was so good, that he abandoned his original intention of proceeding to Calcutta, and remained at Madras with the prospect of being speedily appointed to the charge of a military male orphan asylum which was about to be commenced.

The tide of fortune rapidly set in: within two months of his arrival he was appointed (subject to confirmation at home) Chaplain to the 4th European Regiment, then stationed at Arcot. Nine days afterwards he was nominated to the deputy chaplainship of the 19th Regiment of Cavalry. In October he obtained a second deputy chaplainship to the 36th, then at Poonamalee; and on the day following to a third, in the 52nd Regiment. During this time he delivered a course of *philosophical* lectures, which produced him

the sum of £360. A second course, only producing about one half of this amount, he sailed with his apparatus for Calcutta, where he experienced 'the most gratifying reception.' Lord Cornwallis invited him to his table, and allowed him the use of his court-house for his lectures. The course brought him nearly £500. 'In less than a month after his return to Madras he was appointed deputy chaplain to the 74th, being *the fifth* appointment conferred upon him in little more than a year and a half.' This was, indeed, to use his own phrase, found in an early letter, '*encouragement in the line of the church.*'

But even this was not enough. *Three* other appointments shortly followed, all of which were accepted by the greedy pluralist without compunction. 'Kehama,' says Dr. Southey, with quiet, but biting sarcasm, 'who was in eight places at once, was a type of Dr. Bell at this time. Some of these offices may have been sinecures; but there is good proof among his papers that none of them were sine-salaries.' One of the appointments, that of undertaker-general, was a strange one to be held by a clergyman, and 'curious' indeed are the 'instructions' drawn up by him, in his new character of furnisher of funerals, for the lower functionary who did all the work, and received from the doctor a graduated *per centage on the cost of the interment.*

In the spring of 1793, he delivered a third course of lectures at Madras, in one of which 'he performed the experiment of making ice, which was the first time it had been exhibited in India.' He had previously been elected a member of the Asiatic Society, and he now realized about 600 pagodas.

Scarcely had the lectures been concluded, before the governor in council appointed him 'to do duty as chaplain to the army assembled before Pondicherry, with an allowance of one hundred pagodas *per mensem*, to defray his extraordinary expenses while so employed.' Here, (when not engaged in some of the mournful offices which he was called upon to perform,) 'his time passed pleasantly.' When the batteries were opened, he was rash enough to go into the trenches, and 'Colonel Floyd, who was the most intimate of his friends, when he took possession of the fort, ordered him to walk into it by his side.'

A new and altogether different scene now opens. The Military Orphan Asylum at Madras is at length established, and Dr. Bell offers his services as superintendent *without salary*, a step which some of his friends thought he had taken with 'far too little consideration of his own interest.' But the Doctor, wiser in his generation than they suspected, adhered to his own judgment, and

declined receiving any compensation out of the subscription.

To this important work he devoted himself with a zeal and assiduity highly creditable. Struggling manfully against the difficulties of his situation,—hindered rather than helped by obstinate and incapable teachers,—distressed by the want of discipline, and painfully conscious of the unreasonable time consumed in imparting to the children a knowledge even of the letters of the alphabet, he pondered much and deeply on the perplexities of his position, and amid surrounding gloom looked anxiously, but in vain, in all directions, for a single ray of light. Mr. Southey's words will best describe the breaking of the day.

‘Things were in this state, when, happening on one of his morning's rides to pass by a Malabar school, he observed the children seated on the ground, and writing with their fingers in sand which had for that purpose been strewn before them. He hastened home, repeating to himself as he went, *Ευρηκα* ‘I have discovered it;’ and gave immediate orders to the usher of the lowest classes to teach the alphabet in the same manner, with this difference only from the Malabar mode, that the sand was strewn upon a board. These orders were either disregarded, or so carelessly executed, as if they were thought not worth regarding; and after

frequent admonitions, and repeated trials, made without either expectation or wish of succeeding, the usher at last declared it was impossible to teach the boys in that way. If he had acted on this occasion in good will, and with merely common ability, Dr. Bell might never have cried *Ευρηκα* a second time. But he was not a man to be turned from his purpose by the obstinacy of others, nor to be baffled in it by their incapacity; baffled, however, he was now sensible that he must be, if he depended for the execution of his plans on the will and ability of those over whose minds he had no command. He bethought himself of employing a boy, on whose obedience, disposition, and cleverness he could rely, and giving him charge of the alphabet class. The lad's name was John Friskin; he was the son of a private soldier, had learned his letters in the asylum, and was then about eight years old. Dr. Bell laid the strongest injunctions upon him to follow his instructions; saying, he should look to him for the success of the simple and easy method which was to be pursued, and hold him responsible for it. What the usher had pronounced to be impossible, this lad succeeded in effecting without any difficulty. The alphabet was now as much better taught, as till then it had been worse than any other part of the boys' studies; and Friskin, in conse-

quence, was appointed permanent teacher of that class.

‘Though Dr. Bell did not immediately perceive the whole importance of this successful experiment, he proceeded in the course into which he had been as it were compelled. What Friskin had accomplished with the alphabet class, might, in like manner, be done with those next in order, by boys selected as he had been, for their aptitude to learn and to teach. Accordingly, he appointed boys as assistant teachers to some of the lower classes, giving, however, to Friskin the charge of superintending both the assistants and their classes, because of his experience and the readiness with which he apprehended and executed whatever was required from him. This talent, indeed, the lad possessed in such perfection, that Dr. Bell did not hesitate to throw upon him the entire responsibility of this part of the school. The same improvement was now manifested in these as had taken place in teaching the alphabet. This he attributed to the diligence and fidelity with which his little friends, as he used to call them, performed his orders. To them a smile of approbation was no mean reward, and a look of displeasure sufficient punishment. Even in this stage he felt confident, that nothing more was wanting to bring the school *into such a state as he had always pro-*



posed to himself, than to carry through the whole of the plan upon which he was now proceeding; and this, accordingly, was done. The experiment, which from necessity had been tried at first with one class, was systematically extended to all the others in progression; and, what is most important, with scholastic improvement, moral amendment, not less in consequence of the system, is said to have kept pace.'

His letters to his friends from this time (1792) until his return to Europe, which took place, in consequence of the failure of his health, in 1796, are filled with accounts of the school, which now engrossed all his thoughts. From these it clearly appears, that he considered the main principle of his system to be, 'tuition by the scholars themselves, or, as it was afterwards called, mutual instruction,' and he had carried this principle so fully into action, that 'the whole business of instruction was for a time carried on exclusively by the boys themselves.' \*

\* Dr. Bell's philosophical apparatus having been purchased by the government of Madras for the purpose of being presented to Tippoo Sultan, Smith, one of the boys of the asylum, who had occasionally assisted the Dr. in his experiments, was appointed to take charge of it on the road, and to exhibit before the sultan. Tippoo was found to possess more knowledge of this kind than was supposed. 'He exhibited a condensing engine of his own making, which spouted water higher

He now turned a longing eye towards England. How long he should stay, and with *how much* money he should be satisfied, are questions frequently occurring in the correspondence. 'Bring a good constitution, and £10,000 with you,' says his friend Mr. Dempster, 'and you wont desire to return from wanting the comforts of life.' 'Single gentlemen,' writes Mr. Ames, 'may certainly be comfortable upon £500 per annum, but if a family is in view, double that income will be necessary.' But the Doctor again looked further than his friends. 'Say,' he writes to Mrs. Cockburn, 'what *the living in the church* should be, to induce a man to forego India?' The reply is not given. He sailed for England on the 20th of August, 1796, having accumulated, according to his own carefully drawn account, £25,935 16s. 5d., a tolerable reward for nine years' clerical service in India, and a convincing proof that he had not sought in vain for 'encouragement in the line of the church.' After this it seems scarcely necessary to parade his disinterestedness in declining a passage home at the expense of the charity.

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than Smith's;' he 'understood the management of the electrical machine;' and instead of regarding the experiments as mere amusements, he immediately sought to make the apparatus available for the *introduction of useful knowledge among his people.*

On his arrival in London, Dr. Bell lost no time in communicating with the India House, but began at once to take measures for securing a retiring allowance from the East India Company. He first of all consulted Mr. David Scott, the chairman, and wrote to his early friend, Mr. Dempster, to request his interest. Mr. Dempster's reply does him great credit. 'I have,' he says, 'as little interest as you with Mr. Scott. The very little I have I would rather reserve to help the helpless, than expend in adding more rupees to the enormous heap you have brought home with you.' 'Nothing daunted by this rebuff,' says his biographer, he proceeded to draw up a memorial, addressed to the Court of Directors, in which he set forth, in strong colours, the extraordinary success which had attended his labours in the asylum, ascribing it entirely (on the authority of the Madras government) to his new system, and '*to the disinterested conduct he had shown in refusing, while so employed, to accept any salary.*' After a few months' effort, he succeeded in obtaining a pension of £200 per annum.

He now (1797) printed a report of the asylum, which he entitled, 'An Experiment in Education made at the male asylum at Madras, suggesting a system by which a School or Family may teach itself under the *superintendence* of a Master or Parent.'

This pamphlet he recommended by letter to the attention of David Dale at Lanark; he sent copies to many influential persons in different parts of the kingdom: he attempted to introduce his plan into various schools both in England and Scotland; and in one of his letters to the printer, he says:—‘You will mark me for an enthusiast, but if you and I live a thousand years, we shall see this system of education spread over the world.’

On the 3rd of November, 1800, he married Miss Agnes Barclay, eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. Barclay, of Middleton; and, in 1801, ‘he received and accepted the offer of the rectory of Swanage, in Dorset, from the patron, Mr. Calcraft, with whom he had not been previously acquainted.’ With his wife he appears to have received £7,500; the value of his living, including the patronage of the parish of Worth, was at least £800 per annum; his pension from the East India Company was £200 per annum; and his Indian spoil was £25,935. Early in December (1801), he took possession of his preferment, and preached his first sermon on Christmas day: having by this time, one would think, reason to be abundantly satisfied with ‘the encouragement’ he had met with ‘in the line of the church.’

In the year 1808 Dr. Bell succeeded in *exchanging* the living of Swanage for the

mastership of Sherburn Hospital, valued at about £1200 a-year, and, as residence was not required, he took a house in London. Here he remained in tolerable quiet until the year 1811, when the formation of the Diocesan Societies, and soon after of the National Society, took place.

The immediate cause of this latter and more important movement was, a sermon preached in St. Paul's, at the yearly meeting of the children educated in the charity schools of London, by the Rev. Dr. Marsh; in which, after maintaining that all national education ought to be conducted on 'the principle of the religion by law established,' he attacks Lancaster's method *as a dissenting plan*, and urges the association of churchmen with churchmen, 'in order to retain the faithful band' who are still disposed to 'rally' round the church.

On the 16th of October (1811), THE NATIONAL SOCIETY was constituted, and, after some opposition on the part of the Bishop of London, Dr. Bell was elected an honorary member of the general committee, and thus in fact installed as director-general of the institution. Whether Dr. Bell's liberality of sentiment on some points was, or was not the cause of this opposition, does not appear, but it is gratifying to find him, in a *letter to Mr. Southey*, saying, 'I am free to

confess that I think we should draw the children to church by cords of love, and not drag them by chains of iron. But in this respect I differ from many of the wisest and best men.' Southey, too, has some admirable observations on this subject. 'The children should be *allowed*,' he says, 'to accompany the master to church, and not *required* to do it; and this not merely for the sake of the orthodox dissenters, (to whom, however, it ought to be allowed,) but because *it is better that they should go with their parents*, than with their school-fellows and their master. In the one case, example is likely to be mischievous, as it is sure to be beneficial in the other. Every one will understand this who recollects with what different feelings the church service impressed him, when he attended in his own parish church by his mother's side, and when he went among a drove of school-boys.' Intolerance, however, gained the day, and 'chains of iron' were judged to be more efficacious in promoting church going than 'cords of love.'

From this time until his decease, a period of above twenty years, the life of Dr. Bell blends with the progress of the National Society and of its schools. To the service of that society he devoted himself with unwearied zeal and assiduity, travelling extensively *on its behalf*, and labouring for the

diffusion of his system with untiring energy. The crowded meetings of the British and Foreign School Society appear occasionally to have carried both astonishment and dismay into the more orthodox camp, but on the whole things went on quietly. In the month of January (1818) the Doctor was presented to a stall, 'of good value,' in Hereford Cathedral, which he subsequently exchanged for one in Westminster Abbey, valued at £1100 a year; 'the rich preferments,' he says, 'which all my brethren enjoy, being shut against me,' at Hereford. In soliciting this exchange, through the interest of the Bishop of Durham, he modestly says, 'If unexampled and *disinterested* services to the crown, to the church, and to the state, entitle a man to the notice and the favour of the minister, I shall not be afraid to put my claim in competition with that of any other man. If sacrifices made, odium incurred, and successful struggles encountered in their behalf, *and without their support or protection*, give pretensions, mine have not been wanting to a degree that few will believe.' This letter displeased the bishop, as well it might, and he returned no answer. But Dr. Bell was not to be so easily put aside. At no period of his life had he ever lost anything for want of solicitation, nor did he now withdraw his *claim because* others might imagine that he

took too high a view of his own merits. He steadily persevered, and his wishes were ultimately acceded to.

In 1830 the health of Dr. Bell decidedly failed; and in 1831 Sir Benjamin Brodie stated his agreement with Dr. Newell in the opinion, that the nerves of the larynx were in a degree paralytic, as well as the organs of deglutition. His mind was, however, in full vigour, and his vanity as rampant as ever. 'His money,' says his biographer, 'was now a burden to him.' After changing his mind again and again as to its disposal, he at length suddenly transferred £120,000 to trustees at St. Andrews for a projected college. He then wrote to Dr. Southey, requesting that he and Mr. Wordsworth would edit his works, and begging their acceptance of £2000, and all expenses paid, and the expenses of those they might employ. Southey accepts the trust, and incidentally refers to his own declining strength. 'I am old enough myself,' he says, 'to have the end of my journey in view, and to feel what a blessing it will be to escape from the cares of this world, throw off the burden of human infirmities, and be united in the kingdom of heaven with those dear ones who have gone before us.'

Dr. Southey very properly urged, that as almost all his wealth had *come* from the church, *some of it, at least, ought to return to it; and*



suggested to him a plan for augmenting poor livings. Dr. Bell at first seemed to acquiesce, but soon after altered his opinion. One-twelfth of the amount he had placed in the hands of trustees (£10,000) he subsequently gave to the Royal Naval School, and five other twelfths he transferred to the towns of Edinburgh, Leith, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Inverness. His Scotch estates, producing a yearly rental of about £400, he made over to trustees for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the education of youth in Cupar Fife, subject to a miserable annuity of £100 to his sister; £20 annually to six other persons; and £10 to Thomas Clark. His princely donation to St. Andrews proved most unfortunate; it involved him in disputes with the trustees, terminating only with his death, which took place at Cheltenham, on the 27th of January, 1832, in the 79th year of his age. His remains were removed to London, on the 9th of February, and deposited in Westminster Abbey on the 14th; the highest dignitaries of the church, and other eminent persons, attending as mourners.

## CHAP. III.

### THE CONTROVERSY.—BEL AND THE 'DRAGON.

THE *fact* is undoubted, that Lancaster, a very few years after his commencement, was managing a thousand children, aided only by boys acting as monitors. The *point in dispute* is, whether he was doing this by methods of his own devising, or whether, as Mr. Southey harshly expresses it, 'deriving from Dr. Bell his knowledge of the system, he claimed for himself, with consummate effrontery, the honour of the invention?' We can only say for ourselves that, after carefully perusing all the evidence that has been offered in support of this frequently-repeated charge, we see no reason whatever to believe that Lancaster was guilty of acting the base and unprincipled part attributed to him; and, believing this, we cannot but severely blame those who have accused him so rashly.

That Dr. Bell *preceded* Lancaster in the use of what was afterwards termed the system of mutual instruction, we freely admit; but we can by no means allow the claim subsequently made on his behalf, that he was as much the *discoverer* of the principle of conducting a school by means of the scholars

themselves, 'as Franklin was of electricity, or Jenner of vaccination.' The chevalier Paulet had certainly preceded him. In the *Literary Repository* for April 16th, 1788, there is an account of the establishment of this celebrated man in Paris, translated from the *Journal* of Geneva. Two principles are there distinctly laid down as carried out in his school. One is, that 'the pupils govern themselves;' the other, that 'the care of instruction is, to a great extent, devolved upon the scholars.' A president of the parliament of Bordeaux, who was visiting this institution, was, it is said, so much struck with the abilities of a scholar of fourteen, in instructing his class, that he engaged him as tutor to his son, a boy of eight years old. Similar details abundantly show that fifteen years before the Madras Asylum was instituted, the principle of mutual instruction was both known and practised.

The truth is, so far as we have been able to ascertain it, that both Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster were, to a certain extent, inventors, and *both*, to a much larger extent, adopters and improvers of existing plans. Pressed by the same difficulties as Dr. Bell, and, like him, familiar with military tactics, Lancaster appears, without being conscious of it, to have resorted to the same expedient. Inspired by *equal, if not superior* energy, he seems to

have produced the same result. Excited by similar success, and perhaps inflamed by like vanity, he imitated his predecessor in magnifying the importance of his method, and in claiming an amount of merit *as a discoverer*, which, to say the least of it, was preposterous and absurd. But that he was 'fraudulent,' 'dishonest,' 'tricky,' and 'immoral,' or, as Coleridge expresses it, that he was 'a wretched quack,' 'a liar,' 'an ignorant, vulgar, arrogant charlatan,' we do not for a moment believe. Whatever were the faults of his maturer years, his early life was that of a sincere, humble, and disinterested Christian.

Lancaster's own account of the matter, given in a letter to Dr. Bell, dated Nov. 21st, 1804, carries with it all the appearance of truthfulness and integrity; and as at that time he was corresponding with the Doctor as a friend, was proposing to visit him at Swanage, was asking his advice, and soliciting his aid, there seems no reason for supposing that he would do otherwise than express himself with straightforwardness and simplicity. He says,—

'I began a day school (in 1798). The methods I pursued soon became popular, and people sent their children in crowds. This plunged me into a dilemma; the common modes of tuition did not apply; and in

puzzling myself what to do, *I stumbled upon a plan similar to thine*; not, however, meeting with thy book till 1800. I have succeeded wonderfully, yet not equal to my desire. If thou wilt favour me with any original reports of the asylum at Madras, (for nothing is more essential than minutiae,) I shall be much obliged.'

Now let it be borne in mind, that at this time Mr. Lancaster's pretensions were not concealed; that for some years he had been claiming, through the press, to be *the inventor* of his 'improvements in education;' that in doing this he had referred distinctly, and by name, to Dr. Bell, recommending his book to the friends of education, acknowledging, without reserve, the value of 'several useful hints' he had adopted from it, and stating, that in some things he had 'been endeavouring to walk in his footsteps;' and then let any candid person say whether, if Dr. Bell had regarded him as a mere plagiarist, he would not have availed himself of the opportunity afforded by the receipt of this letter, to unmask his hypocrisy and to expose his pretensions?

The editor says, 'It does not appear what answer Dr. Bell returned to this letter.' As the original reply is now before us, we can supply the deficiency. It shall speak for *itself*:—

‘Swanage, 6th Dec., 1804.

‘DEAR FRIEND,—I was yesterday favoured with your letter, and the outlines, &c. I had before heard of your fame, and the progress which you had made in a new mode of tuition, and have long expected the pleasure of seeing you at Swanage; and though your letter does not promise me a speedy accomplishment of this expectation, still I shall hope that you will fulfil your intention as soon as shall suit your convenience.

‘When I put my essay into the hands of my bookseller I said—with the apology suited to such enthusiasm—that ‘before the end of the next century every school in Europe would be taught on this principle.’ I was pleased to see it some time ago acted upon and recited in the reports of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor, and am delighted to hear that in the beginning of the century you have afforded such a specimen of the success of this system. I am fully sensible of the many disadvantages which you have to encounter; and, as recounted by you, they are, for the most part, such as I could have foreseen. I shall endeavour to find my original reports at Madras, that I may communicate them; but you will not meet with the details which you expect in them, as they were presented to those who had daily opportunities of seeing the seminary. Nor can I pretend to recite a thousand particulars which I could do *viva voce*, and which I hope to do soon in thy school, which I promise myself much pleasure in attending when I am next in town.’

‘I have been strongly urged to publish a brief extract of my essay for general circulation. Now you will do me a kindness by taking a copy of my publication, and drawing your pen through every line which you think might be spared, without any essential defect of information, taking care to efface whatever is not necessary to give an idea of the system of instruction. By this means I apprehend the pamphlet may be

reduced to a very few pages. At the same time I shall be glad of any observations which you may see fit to make, and particularly whether any part is difficult to be understood, and where you think a fuller explanation necessary.

‘In this way I may have an opportunity of recommending your institution, more general and more effectual than any other I could propose. For this purpose I must see everything with my own eyes, and by hearing of your difficulties I shall best know what requisite information I omitted in the report of my system, which does not comprehend more than the general principle and outlines of the mode of tuition. At all events I shall trust to your erasing everything which can possibly be left out in my publication as not bearing upon the elucidation of the system, but which I thought it necessary to insert in the first publication.\*

‘I am anxious to see your book, and still more to see yourself, and remain, my good friend, your sincere well wisher,  
‘A. BELL.’

Lancaster shortly afterwards visited Dr. Bell at Swanage; he remained there several days, and seems to have been pleased with his visit. A year afterwards Dr. Bell, in writing to Mrs. Trimmer, smiles at the absurdity of his attempts ‘to form teachers by lectures on the passions’—a thing he never pretended to do,—and observes, sensibly enough, that ‘it is by attending the school, seeing what is going on there, and taking a share in the office of tuition, that teachers are to be formed, and not by lectures and abstract instruction;’ but he finds no fault

\* *The letter is too long to insert entire.*

with Lancaster beyond this, that he ‘solicited’ his ‘subscription oftener than once,’ ‘which,’ says the Doctor, ‘I flatly declined;’ not, however, on the ground of his acting unfairly, but simply for this reason—that he had determined to confine his offices to the schools under his own immediate eye.

Mrs. Trimmer seems to have been the first to suggest the idea of Lancaster’s criminality, and the motive is but too obvious. Her letter is dated ‘Brentford, Sept. 24th, 1805,’ in which, after informing Bell of her intention to insert some extracts from his ‘Experiment on Education,’ in a periodical she was publishing, she adds,—

‘From the time, Sir, that I read Mr. Joseph Lancaster’s ‘Improvements in Education,’ in the first edition, I conceived an idea that there was something in his plan that was inimical to the interests of the Established Church; and when I read your ‘Experiment in Education,’ to which Mr. L. referred, I plainly perceived he had been building on your foundation. You know, without doubt, how the public mind is, I may say, infatuated with his plausible appearances; and I judge, by the republication of your ‘Experiment,’ that you are not an unconcerned spectator of this perversion of what you have applied to so excellent a purpose. Engaged as I have long been in striving to promote the interests of the church, by the exertion of my little talents for the instruction of the rising generation, and the prevention of the mischief that is aimed against them in various ways, I cannot see this ‘Goliath of Schismatics’ bearing down all before him, and engrossing the instruction of



the common people, without attempting to give him a little check. Indeed, I told him a year ago, that I should, at my first leisure, attempt to analyze his system, and this I shall soon set about. But, preparatory to it, I thought it might answer a good purpose to point out, in an incidental way, by means of a review of your work, that Mr. Lancaster was not the original inventor of the plan. If the sale of your pamphlet is extensive, I may, perhaps, have done what was unnecessary; but, knowing my motive, you will not think me impertinent.

‘I have the honour to be, Rev. Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

‘SARAH TRIMMER.’

To this letter Dr. Bell replies in a style unworthy of himself, and altogether unlike his former communication. Mrs. Trimmer’s letter, although the production of a sensible and Christian woman, was jesuitical; and it was all but an avowal that she was about ‘to do evil that good might come.’ It was to Dr. Bell, ‘Satan in the guise of an angel of light.’ It found ‘something’ in him that responded to its evil suggestions. It awoke slumbering jealousy and pride, and it drew from him the following pitiful remarks on the character and conduct of his last year’s guest:—

‘During his stay with me, which was of some days’ continuance, I detailed many particulars of my practice, and many opinions on the conduct of a school, with which he was in some points totally unacquainted. I observed his consummate front, his importunate solicitation of subscriptions in any and every shape, his

plausible and ostentatious guise; and, in his third edition, I think I see something which indicates that he is confident he cannot stand alone, basking in the sunshine of royal countenance and popular applause, forgetting, for a while, his own presentiment, 'That as much as he is cried up, so much will he be hereafter traduced.'

'The plan of instruction in a public charity, by teachers, assistants, tutors, as I have styled them—or, monitors, as he denominated them—appears to me, who am an enthusiast, so simple, so natural, so beautiful, and so true, that it must, sooner or later, have obtained a footing; and all I ever expected by my humble essay, printed rather than published, was, that it might fall into hands which would bring the system forward sooner than might otherwise happen in the course of things. J. L. has certainly contributed to this consummation. How far he has directed it to the best purposes, and whether he has intermixed much quackery, conceit, and ignorance, is another question.'

In November, 1805, Mrs. Trimmer published her pamphlet entitled, 'A Comparative View of the new Plan of Education promulgated by Mr. Joseph Lancaster, and of the System of Christian Education founded by our pious Forefathers.' In this work she considers, that a national system of education ought to be 'built on the Church Catechism;' and expresses her opinion, although without, or rather *in spite of, evidence*, that *under the name of the leading principles of Christianity*, Mr. Lancaster builds on the basis of morality alone. She regards the first as 'teaching duties,' the latter as 'creating

habits ;' the one (the Church Catechism) as 'calculated to regulate the passions and subdue the evil propensities of the youthful heart,' the other (the leading principles of Christianity) 'in some things cherishing and indulging the passions beyond due bounds.' The more she looks into Lancaster's works, 'the worse opinion' she has 'of his views and intentions.' It is 'a great satisfaction' to her 'to find that he is attacked from another quarter.' Her 'fear' is, that 'the Methodists will make great advantage by the plan.' She is told 'by a lady who visited the school last summer that there were thirteen of the principal Methodist preachers of London there that day;' with much more in the same strain. Dr. Bell writes to her, observing, very sensibly, that there was but one way in which Lancaster's efforts could be effectually checked, and that was by doing something themselves. Every letter from Mrs. Trimmer now brings him some new information, and he urges her to write constantly and unreservedly to him. She responds, by rejoicing, that 'through the well-directed zeal of an excellent friend,' the 'arrogant Quaker' has been disappointed in his attempt to set up a school at Windsor, and she has 'every reason to think that all which he included under the term royal *patronage* will be in future discontinued.'

The 'dignitaries of the Church also,' she informs him, 'even the highest, are fully convinced of the danger of the plan of forming the children of the lower orders into one organized body, and have consulted together concerning the measures which it may be proper to employ to prevent its taking effect.'

From this time till the year 1811 the work dragged heavily. In vain did Dr. Bell write, 'It cannot be dissembled that thousands, in various parts of the kingdom, are drawn off from the Church by the superior attention paid to education out of the Church,'—in vain did he visit bishops and archbishops, giving, on one occasion, 2000 copies of his 'Experiment on Education' to the Archbishop of Canterbury for distribution among his clergy; with the exception of being called upon to re-organize the Royal Military Asylum at Chelsea, and to introduce his system into a few other schools, nothing effectual was done. Prevailing distrust, if not absolute dread of education, paralyzed every effort, and effectually checked any well-organized movement in its favour. Southey boldly asserts that the heads of the Church did their duty at last, not because they were persuaded to it, but because they were 'frightened and shamed into it by the Dragon.' \*

\* Lancaster. An educational caricature was at this time exhibiting, called 'Bel and the Dragon.'

The extent to which this feeling prevailed may be surmised from the fact, that Dr. Bell so far yielded to it as to insert, in the third edition of his ‘Experiment,’ the following paragraph :—

‘ It is not proposed that the children of the poor be educated in an expensive manner, *or even taught to write, and to cypher.* Parents will always be found to educate at their own expense children enow to fill the stations which require higher qualifications ; and there is a risk of elevating, by an indiscriminate education, the minds of those doomed to the drudgery of daily labour, above their condition, and thereby rendering them discontented and unhappy in their lot.’

Thus far is given by the editor, who kindly does his best to deliver the Doctor out of the inconsistency into which he had fallen, and which had justly exposed him to the taunt of being an advocate for the universal *limitation* of knowledge. But Dr. Bell went further than this. He stooped to sneer at ‘ Utopian schemes for the universal diffusion of general knowledge,’ which, he said, ‘ would soon realize the fable of the belly and the other members of the body, and confound that distinction of ranks and classes in society on which the general welfare hinges, and the happiness of the lower orders, no less than that of the higher, depends.’ This was pitiful, from a man who at other times professed such zeal for education. What right had he afterwards *to complain* that the names of Mandeville

and Bell were associated, when he had thus gravely argued that the children of the labouring classes were to have ignorance, which Shakspeare calls 'the curse of God,' rivetted upon them, because their parents subsisted by daily labour? The following is from a letter to him by Mr. Coleridge, under date of the 15th of April, 1808, and apparently written with reference to the false position he had now assumed :—

'I confess that I seem to perceive some little of an effect produced by talking with *objectors*, with men who, to a man like you, are far, far more pernicious than avowed antagonists. Men who are actuated by fear and perpetual suspicion of human nature, and who regard their poor brethren as possible highwaymen, burglarists, or Parisian revolutionists—which includes all evils in one—and who, if God gave them grace to know their own hearts, would find that even the little good they are willing to do proceeds from fear, from a momentary variation of the balance of probabilities, which happened to be in favour of letting their brethren know just enough to keep them from the gallows. O, dear Dr. Bell, you are a great man! Never, never permit minds so inferior to your own, however high their artificial rank may be, to induce you to pare away *an atom* of what you know to be right. The sin that besets a truly good man is, that, naturally desiring to see instantly done what he knows will be eminently useful to his fellow-beings, he sometimes will consent to sacrifice a part, in order to realize in a given spot, (to construct, as the mathematicians say,) his idea in a given diagram. But yours is for the world—for all mankind; and all your opposers might, with as good chance of success, stop the half moon

from becoming full; all they can do is, a little to retard it. Pardon, dear Sir, a great liberty taken with you, but one which my heart and sincere reverence for you impelled. As the apostle said, Rejoice! so I say to you, *Hope!* From hope—faith, and love, all that is good, all that is great, all lovely and ‘honourable things’ proceed. From fear—distrust, and the spirit of compromise—all that is evil.’

This letter is every way worthy of the venerable man by whom it was written, and with it this controversy may very suitably close. Had Mr. Coleridge known more of Lancaster than he did, he would have freely admitted that, with all his faults, he was something far better than a mere ‘ignorant, vulgar, arrogant charlatan;’ he would have allowed that *to him*,—to his zeal, ingenuity, and perseverance, may fairly be attributed the awakening of the public mind to the duty of caring for the instruction of the poor; and he would thankfully have acknowledged that to his efforts may be traced, in no slight degree, the subsequently rapid spread of knowledge, the growth and enlargement of the popular mind, and the moral and intellectual improvement of the labouring classes of society in these realms.

## CHAP. IV.

### CHARACTERISTICS.—THE TWO COMPARED.

PERHAPS we should rather say, *contrasted*; for the diversities of character in the two men were many and striking. Lancaster, through his whole course, is the religious enthusiast; Bell, from youth to age, is distinguished by worldly-minded prudence. While the one is burning with desire to teach the Blacks to read the Bible; the other is quietly earning a reputation for sobriety and circumspection. When Lancaster is 'frequenting the meetings of Friends, and sacrificing worldly prospects to obtain inward peace,' Bell is fighting a duel, and preparing to take orders in the Church. While the unworldly Quaker is exclaiming, 'I don't want a stock of money, I only want a stock of faith;' the 'disinterested' Churchman is insatiate in his lust after place and preferment. While the one, generous to a fault and benevolent to a weakness, is complaining that his 'soul succumbs under the burden when he sees hearts breaking under distress' and he 'cannot or dare not help them;' the other, careful, and a little covetous withal, is pinching the 'brethren,' and bringing upon himself



a visitation from the bishop. Both are proud; but with this difference,—Lancaster is arrogant, Bell, vain. Both are self-worshippers, ‘the eye’ of each is ‘ever on himself;’ but the result is not the same: in the one, self-complacency *destroys love*; in the other, it produces something like insanity. Under its influence, Lancaster, always generous and fervid, becomes habitually wasteful and flighty; Bell, with a natural tendency to be hard and grasping, becomes as habitually selfish and morose,—‘of the earth, and earthy.’

‘The gratification which Dr. Bell derived from the display of a particular kind of knowledge, from the reception of praise and respect, the tribute due to his discovery and public reputation, encouraged and fed his restless vanity to such a degree, that his feelings, unless relieved by indulgence, would (says Mr. Bamford) have made him intensely miserable.’ He had become so accustomed to bustle and change, and to new faces, with new admiration, that he could never be happy for any length of time in one place. His fame, too, was spread, and a monument of renown erected by the establishment of every school. The fervour of travelling, and the excitement of fresh company, were necessary to carry off that exuberance of passion which, if not thus spent, would, I think—*even if he were alone and in solitude*—have

accumulated and overflowed in vehement and fiery fits. Food, too, was continually required to nourish those notions of his self-importance which stationary friends, by too great intimacy, might neglect or refuse to gratify.

It is true, that disregarding all personal care, and toil, and expense, wherever his services could be useful, however distant the place or unknown the applicants, no self-considerations restrained his zeal, or came into competition with his eager desire to bring his system into public notice and favour, and to keep up its character and reputation with others. In process of time, however, this craving for admiration from diversity of persons increased into a strong and overpowering feeling. It was not surprising, therefore, that he wrought himself into a belief that, as he was signally appointed by Providence to be the means of bringing to light such an instrument for the education of the body of the people, and the consummation of the blessed Reformation, so it was his duty personally to give his assistance whenever it was desired or likely to advance his great object.

Still, perhaps, it had been better for himself and the cause in which he was engaged, either to have confined his instructions to fewer places, or to have communicated them

with more grace. Previously to his arrival in any town he was, from his public character and his disinterested employment, regarded as highly as his own pretensions could desire; but a first or second visit most commonly lessened the respect or checked the ardour of those who had given their time and money towards the establishment of the schools, and who found themselves and their labours frequently depreciated, censured, and offended. Instead of delivering his instructions and making his remarks in a gentlemanly and conciliatory mode, so as to gain upon adult masters by his suavity, his personal behaviour was such that he was almost universally dreaded and disliked. His treatment of them in their schools, in the presence of their pupils, was frequently calculated to create any other sentiments than respect and attention. His conduct not only at the time alienated them from him, but it created a dislike which embittered and rendered heartless all their subsequent endeavours. It might be commonly true that there was ground for his observations; but his style of talking to them, and his remarks, with a kind of boundless rage and bluster, were, in their estimation, not only unkind and unnecessary, but vexatious and oppressive.

His passion for money was inordinate, and *it deservedly brought upon him, especially in*

his management of Sherburn Hospital, annoyance and obloquy. His views of human nature were affected by this propensity, and were consequently low and mean. 'He regarded money as the *primum mobile*, and only efficient stimulant in the world. He excited masters by a negative kind of threat. He did not say, 'Do this, and you shall have so much beyond your regular and fixed salary :' which, at best, might be barely sufficient to command the necessaries of life—but, 'Do this, or you shall be mulcted, or lose your situation.' He would have had all the masters under such an arbitrary kind of control, that if the school did not weekly and monthly increase in numbers, and order, and attendance, and improve in progress, the master should be subject to weekly and monthly fines, and be paid according to the periodical state of the school. 'I can do more,' said he to the Archbishop of Canterbury, taking a half-crown out of his pocket, 'I can do more with this half-crown than you can do with all your fixed salaries.'"

He never appears to have lived happily with his wife, and in June, 1815, a regular deed of separation was drawn up, and finally executed. He nowhere exhibits *amiability* of character. Few, if any, loved him.

His vanity was prodigious: sometimes it is hateful, sometimes amusing. Mr. Davies, his

amanuensis, whom he would keep employed for months together almost night and day, apparently regardless of his health or comfort, having on one occasion written to him an account of the progress he was making in the wearisome task assigned him of compiling from an immense mass of papers a complete edition of all the Doctor's works, receives the following consolation :—‘ Go on. *You must be well aware how instructive, how exceedingly instructive, your present task is to you, and must still further be when I come to criticise and correct all you shall do.*’ Davies writes that he is at work from six in the morning till ten at night; to which the Doctor replies : ‘ You must work; not as I have done, for that I do not expect, but as you can. *Your labours in no other way can be so profitable to the world, or so improving to yourself.*’

Mr. Bamford's account is equally ludicrous. ‘ He triumphantly displayed the mighty advantages with which I was favoured in being allowed to copy and transcribe, from little scraps of paper and backs of letters, the chaotic effusions of his ardent mind. ‘ This was real training, far better than being at the university; and nobody knew where it might end, or what you may come to, if you give yourself up to this thing.’ He would remark, after he tried my fidelity,—‘ Now you know *all my concerns*; other people require oaths

of secrecy ; no man engages a common clerk, without having security for his faithfulness : but here I allow you to see my papers, and trust only to your honour. Though I do not ask you to swear, yet I expect that you will consider yourself as fully bound as if you were sworn to secrecy.’

In this respect alone,—the attaching of vast importance to supposed discoveries in education,—Lancaster resembled him. *He*, too, had his ‘mysteries,’ known only to the initiated. He, too, was a moral spectacle, and a wonder to himself. If Bell ‘wielded one of the most stupendous engines’ known ‘since the days of our Saviour and his apostles,’ Lancaster was not a whit behind in celebrity. He could instruct ‘a thousand children at the same time out of one book ;’—his ‘youngest pupil could teach arithmetic with the certainty of a mathematician, without knowing anything about it himself :’ and by these ‘wonderful inventions’ the world was to be regenerated. If Bell ‘attached an overweening importance to trifles, and insisted with vehemence on all his notions being adopted,’ Lancaster, (we were about to say,) outdid him,—but that was impossible,—in this species of extravagance. Yet *his* boasted methods of punishment were radically bad, and have long since been abandoned as *degrading and mischievous* ; and his system of

rewards,—including ‘badges of merit,’ ‘orders’ of merit, chains, medals, and expensive prizes,—scarcely less objectionable, have shared the same fate. Time has already set its seal upon the doings of *both* these men, and judgment has long since gone forth. But how different is the verdict to that which they so fondly anticipated ! On all the *peculiarities* in which they gloried, men already pour contempt. The *monitorial* principle survives ; but the trappings with which they encumbered it have long since proved worthless. Their pride is in the dust ; their ambition, a vain show. Posterity will remember them rather as party leaders than as inventors or philanthropists ; and succeeding generations will honour their zeal, their energy, and their perseverance under difficulties, rather than their wisdom, their genius, or their modesty.

In contemplating Dr. Bell as a beneficed clergyman, the mind is painfully affected in discovering no evidence whatever of spirituality of heart. He is always ‘high and dry.’ He has evidently more faith in natural philosophy, than in the gospel, as a means of evangelizing India. Principal M’Cormick writes expressing distrust of the ‘well-meaning but ill-judging patrons of plans for the conversion of Gentoos, and ridicules the idea of attempting to teach Christianity to the *natives of Bengal* by ‘preaching its doctrines

*slap-dash* ;' and faithless Dr. Bell, instead of rebuking his scepticism, replies, that without the power of working miracles '*none can ever* throw down the barriers which enclose their sacred shrines, or gain any converts whom a rational divine or pious Christian, who sets any value on a good life, would not blush to own.'

His theology, too, is more than questionable. He understands by our Saviour's declaration, that we must become 'little children' in order to 'enter the kingdom of heaven,' that, 'among children, and from them, and by becoming as one of them, we are to learn those simple doctrines of nature and truth, *innate in them*, or which readily occur to their minds, as yet unbiassed by authority, prejudice, or custom.' And he calls this the 'school of nature and truth, pointed out by the Son of God.' We are by no means disposed to make any man an offender for a word; but we cannot help observing, that if Lancaster had expressed himself so incautiously, the friends of Dr. Bell would have eagerly seized upon the passage as conclusive evidence of a Socinianized mind.

Lancaster had his theological heresies, but they are of a totally different complexion. *His* perversions of Scripture are all mystical, and it is curious to observe how they blend



with his burning temperament. He is an 'Elijah,' a 'chosen vessel,' a David before Goliath—a Joshua before Jericho. Imaginative and excitable, he is *always* on fire; Bell, very rarely, except when defending 'his system.' The former often manifests heat without light; but the latter, as a Christian, never warms—all is cold as death. Coleridge, in one of his letters to Bell, unconsciously reads his friend a lesson when he observes, 'A man who has nothing better than prudence is fit for no world to come:' he might have had poor Lancaster in his eye when he added, 'and he who does not possess it in full activity is as unfit for the present world.' Both might have profited by his conclusion. 'What then shall we say? Have both prudence and the moral sense, but subordinate the former to the latter; and so possess the flexibility and address of the serpent, to glide through the brakes and jungles of this life, with the wings of a dove to carry us upward to a better.'

## CHAP. V.

### EARLY FRIENDS.—FOX AND CORSTON.

LANCASTER's lack of prudence was happily supplied by a little band of men, now all gone to their reward, who, at great personal sacrifice, nobly came forward in the hour of need, and saved the schools he had established from utter and irremediable ruin. On two or three of these departed worthies we must bestow a passing notice.

WILLIAM CORSTON, the simple-minded author of the little volume already referred to, was once well known as the party who introduced into this country the manufacture of British leghorn. Having shown that, instead of being imported, as heretofore, from Italy and France, it might be manufactured by our own poor, he opened a warehouse for its sale on Ludgate-hill. The discovery attracted much notice. The 'Society of Arts' pronounced the invention a national benefit, and rewarded the inventor with a gold medal. The 'Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor' also noticed this valuable branch of manufacture in their reports. After many vicissitudes, some of

which obliged him more than once to compound with his creditors, he eventually succeeded in his undertaking, and, after a long and laborious life, retired on a small property to his native village of Fincham, in Norfolk, where, at a very early period of his career, he had established a school for poor children. It is due to this good and honourable man to state, that after emerging from pecuniary difficulties, he called his creditors together, and, with rare probity, paid every debt in full.

William Corston was a Moravian by religious profession, a man of tender spirit and of warm affections. We have often heard him relate, with brimming eyes, the circumstance which first led him to take so deep an interest in the education of poor children. 'I was going,' he used to say, 'when I was about twenty years of age, through Buttlane, Deptford, when I heard voices singing, and looking up, saw a board on which was inscribed, 'To the glory of God and the benefit of poor children. This school was erected by Dean Stanhope.' I stood looking and musing upon it, when the voices of the children so affected me, that tears flowed down my cheeks, and the prayer immediately arose in my heart, Oh that it may please God that I may have it in my power one day

to build a school like this for poor children !\* He accomplished his object, and the school still stands, bearing the same inscription,— ‘ To the glory of God and the benefit of poor children.’

Lancaster never had a more attached friend than this good Samaritan. In all his trials we find him pouring his sorrows into the sympathising bosom of the man whom he delights to call his ‘ friend,’ his ‘ fellow-labourer,’ his ‘ brother,’ his ‘ best beloved and faithful one,’—and he never appeals in vain. In later years, Mr. Corston spent most of his time at Fincham, where he died on the 25th of May, 1843, in the 84th year of his age. .

JOSEPH FOX, to whom Lancaster was introduced in 1807, was a medical man, not less eminent for his professional skill, than for his extensive and diversified benevolence. He was, like Corston, a man of quick feelings, and of sensitive nature. In religious sentiment he was either an Independent or a Baptist, we are not sure which. Fox, while at Dover, was taken by the late Sir John Jackson, with whom he was residing, to hear Lancaster lecture, and such was the

\* By some unaccountable mistake Mr. Southey has attributed this incident to Lancaster, and made him the straw-plait manufacturer.

effect produced upon him by the fervid oratory of the speaker, that at the conclusion of the lecture he rose, and with the greatest emotion and solemnity exclaimed, 'Were I to hold my peace, after what I have now heard and experienced, the stones might cry out against me.' His heart and hand were, from this moment, truly devoted to the work.

On his return to London, it was agreed that he should meet Lancaster to dinner at Ludgate-hill, and Mr. Corston thus describes the interview:—

'After dinner, our first subject was the debt. 'Well, Joseph,' said Mr. Fox, 'what do you owe now? Do you owe a thousand pounds?' He only replied, 'Yes.' After a little time, he asked, 'Do you owe *two* thousand pounds?' A significant pause ensued. Joseph again replied, 'Yes.' The third time he inquired, with increased earnestness, affectionately tapping him on the shoulder, 'Do you owe *three* thousand pounds?' Joseph burst into tears. 'You must ask William Corston,' said he. 'He knows better what I owe than I do myself.' Mr. Fox then, rising from his seat, and addressing me, solemnly said, 'Sir, I am come to London to see the devil in his worst shape; tell me what he owes.' 'Why, Sir,' I replied, 'it is nearer *four* thousand than three.' He returned to

his chair, and seemed for some time to be absorbed in prayer; not a word passed from either of us. Mr. Fox at length rose, and, addressing me, said, 'Sir, I can do it with your assistance.' I replied, 'I know, Sir, that God has sent you to help us; and all that I can do is at your command.' He rejoined, 'I can only at present lay my hand upon two thousand pounds. Will you accept all the bills I draw upon you? and every one shall have twenty shillings in the pound, and interest if they require it.' I replied, 'I will.' We then all instantly rose, and embraced each other like children, shedding tears of affection and joy. 'The cause is saved!' exclaimed Mr. Fox. I replied, 'Yes; and a threefold cord is not easily broken.' Thus, through the gracious and almighty hand of Him, who prospers his own cause, and makes it to triumph over all its enemies and obstacles,—thus was the foundation laid for the maintenance of an institution, which was destined to confer the blessing of *Christian* education upon millions and millions of mankind.

'We immediately, and with renewed energy, proceeded with the work. Two days after, the bills, forty-four in number, were drawn, accepted, and given to the creditors; and, with gratitude to the Divine goodness,

it may be added, that they were all honoured as they became due.

‘Soon after this we were joined by several valuable friends; and on March 1, 1808, a committee was formed, consisting of the following persons:—

‘(Their names are given in the order in which they engaged in the work.)

‘THOMAS STURGE,	WILLIAM ALLEN,
WILLIAM CORSTON,	JOHN JACKSON,
JOSEPH FOX,	JOSEPH FOSTER.

‘From this time the accounts were properly kept, the trustees holding themselves responsible to the public. Nevertheless, they were further called upon to advance large sums, from time to time, and for nine years cheerfully sustained the burden of a debt of £8000.

‘At length, Mr. Whitbread, who attended the committee, observed that it was a *shame* that a benevolent public should let six gentlemen be so far in advance for so long a time; and proposed that a hundred friends should be sought for, who would undertake to subscribe or collect £100 each for the work. In three years this plan proved successful, and in that time was raised £11,040, by which a new school was built, and the establishment greatly enlarged. And in the year 1817 the trustees were exonerated.’

Mr. Fox devoted himself with characteristic energy to the work he had undertaken, and on the formation of the British and Foreign School Society, in 1808, he became its secretary,—an office which he rendered honourable by his gratuitous but unceasing and unabated labours. He died on the 11th of April, 1816, at the early age of forty years.

Of the remaining four early friends of Lancaster, (William Allen excepted,) only one was known to the writer of these sketches—JOSEPH FOSTER, an upright and honourable man,—generous, hospitable, sincere, incapable of meanness, and indignant at wrong. He too has gone to his rest, the only one who has left his name and place in the society occupied by a son.

Of the other founders of the institution few now remain. The Dukes of Kent and Sussex, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville, Mr. Whitbread, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Horner, Sir James Macintosh, and many others who might be named, are all gone. And Rowland Hill, whose cheerful voice used so often to ring through the committee-room, as he led in his retiring but noble-hearted friend, John Broadley Wilson, who usually accompanied him from his Friday morning service; and Wilberforce, and



humbler names, a sacramental host, who did good service to the cause in their day and generation, have gone too, leaving the principles they espoused, and the society they established, to be defended, sustained, and preserved, for succeeding generations by those who cherish their memory and occupy their places.

## PART II.

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**WILLIAM ALLEN—HIS LIFE AND  
LABOURS.**



## CHAP. I.

### EARLY LIFE.—TASTES AND TENDENCIES.

ON the 19th of January, 1788, in the chamber of a small house in Spitalfields, and in the evening of the day, a youth, of good talents but limited education, who had just completed his seventeenth year, began for the first time to commit to paper a daily record of his thoughts and feelings, his actings and experiences. The lad was William Allen, son of Job and Margaret Allen, honest and worthy people, members of the Society of Friends, then engaged in the manufacture of silk, and thereby doing well in the world. The diary, continued with but few intermissions during a period of more than half a century, was faithfully kept, and at length embraced the almost entire history of a long and useful life.

The very first entries distinctly indicate the character that was in process of formation. They are brief, but pointed and spiritual. The young disciple records the 'comfort' he had 'experienced in striving against evil thoughts,' regrets his 'impatience,' resolves to 'spend no time unprofitably,' and meditates on the 'happy state of those who are led and guided by the Spirit of truth.' These were

profitable thoughts for 'seventeen;' they proved that the endeavours of his pious parents to make religion attractive to him had not been in vain; and they harmonize with the emotions of love and gratitude which, even in early childhood, filled his eyes with tears, as he repeated to his schoolmistress 'the evening hymn.'

William was already a decided 'Friend,' and fully able to estimate the principles professed by that Society. He mourns to hear it said, 'by a person not of our Society,' that 'the Quakers are the proudest people upon earth, and the most difficult to be pleased in their apparel;' and he is satisfied that 'those who give occasion for such remarks are not Quakers, whatever they may call themselves.' The 'ministry' of Friends is *to him* accompanied by 'a Divine sweetness.' John Pemberton advises him to 'be faithful in small things,' and the words are recorded as the utterances of an oracle. James Thornton remarks, 'Every act of obedience to the Divine requiring brings strength, and every act of disobedience, weakness,' and the sentiment is noted down for everlasting remembrance. 'Surely,' he observes, 'there is something more than words in the testimonies of the servants of the Lord; something within us bears witness to the truth, *and what is it but the good Spirit of God?*'

Meetings for worship are 'favoured seasons' to him; he discerns there 'the excellency of a true gospel ministry;' enjoys 'particular satisfaction in the company of Friends,' and feels 'a great love and an enlargement of heart towards them.'

The *benevolent* affections were not less fully developed. He longs to be the means of relieving suffering, and sympathizes both with man and brute. The 'tyranny and oppression exercised towards the poor Africans,' and the reflection that 'so many thousands are yearly murdered in the disgraceful slave-trade,' 'affect him deeply, and as sugar is undoubtedly one of the chief commodities procured by the labour of slaves,' he resolves, 'through Divine assistance, to persevere in the disuse of it, until the slave-trade shall be abolished;' a resolution to which he stedfastly adhered for forty-three years. The death of 'a faithful dog,' killed by accident in the street, causes him 'a day of bitterness and sorrow;' and as for those who are 'cruel to animals,' he will put 'no confidence in them even in the common concerns of life.' Tender-hearted, conscientious, watchful, averse to the society of persons who had no sense of religion, and alive to the 'secret impressions of duty,' God guided his steps in purity; 'he lived unpolluted by the world; and his young heart hated sin.'

During the whole of the period thus referred to, and probably until he was about two and twenty, he remained under the parental roof, and was employed in his father's business. But, although 'diligent and attentive,' he had no taste for the manufacture of silk. His mind had already received a decided bias in favour of scientific pursuits. Even while a child he had 'a particular predilection for chemistry, and was persevering in his efforts to obtain an experimental knowledge of this science. Astronomy was also a favourite study, and at the age of fourteen he had himself constructed a telescope with which he could see the satellites of Jupiter. In describing the circumstance, he said, that 'not being strong in cash,' he was obliged to go economically to work; he accordingly purchased an eyepiece, an object glass, for which he paid one shilling; he then bought a sheet of pasteboard, which cost twopence; and, having made his tubes, and adjusted his glasses, he found, to his great delight, that the moons were visible. Thus, for fourteenpence, he obtained a source of enjoyment, the recollection of which always afforded him pleasure.'

The close of the year 1792 first associates William Allen with Plough Court, Lombard Street; Joseph Gurney Bevan having introduced him into the chemical establishment

carried on there under his able superintendence. In this new and more agreeable situation his peculiar talents soon became manifest. He devoted himself with characteristic ardour to the duties of his position, and within three years, in consequence of the retirement of Mr. Bevan, he became leading partner in the house, and opened a laboratory at Plaistow. Soon after this, he unites with other Friends in the formation of a philosophical society;\* takes to 'sitting up all night, preparing for lectures and making experiments;' becomes 'very low' for want of letters from a certain 'dear Mary Hamilton,' then residing at Redruth; and, finally, as after this intimation might be expected, is happily married to the lady of his choice.

William Allen was now a busy and a prosperous man. Literary and scientific pursuits, the claims of an extending business, experiments, lectures, meetings at Guy's, and medical studies, employed his days and frequently absorbed his nights; while competence, peace, and domestic felicity shed their blessings on his path, and cheered and refreshed him under labours which would otherwise have been overwhelming.

\* Luke Howard, William Phillips, Joseph Fox, W. H. Pepys, and Samuel Woods, were among the earliest members. Astley Cooper, Dr. Babington, Tilloch, and others, joined afterwards.



But he was soon to learn, by bitter experience, the uncertainty of all earthly joy. On the 6th of September, 1797, just ten months after marriage, his beloved companion gave birth to a daughter, and five days afterwards passed into the unseen and eternal world. His grief was deep and abiding. For a season it seemed as if his soul refused to be comforted. For years afterwards, his journal bears constant testimony to the tenderness of his love and to the depth of his sorrow. Divine consolations were, however, richly mingled in his cup of bitterness, and he was soon made sensible of the blessedness of the discipline to which his 'tortured heart' was subjected.

Indications of spiritual growth at this period appear in various parts of the diary. On one occasion he observes, 'I seemed willing to part with all, that I might win Christ. Oh, how have I longed for a more intimate knowledge of him! May I never love anything more than him! but be favoured to keep everything in subordination, yea, under my feet.' He often commemorates the 'sweet solace' he found 'in waiting upon the Lord,' and urges the petition, 'Make *me* one of those sheep of whom thou hast said, 'They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.''

*With this spirit of dependence there was*

combined habitual watchfulness, and an incessant struggle after higher practical virtue. Hence he determines 'to abridge the time devoted to natural science, and to fast from it,' lest it should absorb the heart. Again, he resolves to be exceedingly careful to avoid every share of egotism, the nurse of vanity. 'I feel,' he says, 'great self-contempt when I detect myself in doing anything to be seen of men. How minute are the ramifications of selfishness! Soul, keep in the valley, be content to let any one take the precedence, study to *be* more than to *seem*.' And again, 'I have seen the beauty, and long to attain to that heavenly disposition of mind that seeks constantly to render those around us happy. May I be favoured to guard against peevishness, even when just cause, or what appears so, is given, and also to strive against foolish lightness!'

The death of his father, which took place about three years after this, and the subsequent decease of a beloved brother, 'possessed of a remarkably sweet and amiable disposition,' opened afresh wounds which had never healed, and led him with increased earnestness to desire that he might be made 'an instrument in the Divine hand of usefulness to others, and, at the same time, be preserved from the flattery and applause of a world lying in wickedness.'

## CHAP. II.

### MANHOOD AND ITS SUCCESSES.

WE left Mr. Allen, in 1797, a happy but a toiling man, his days and nights alike devoted to the claims of business and science. For a time, domestic bereavements checked his ardour and turned the current of his thoughts; but it was only for a season. Two years afterwards he was again immersed in the search after all knowledge. One day, in connection with Astley Cooper and Dr. Bradley, he is eagerly engaged in experiments on respiration, breathing the gaseous oxide of azote; until fixed eyes, purple face, swollen veins, and apoplectic stertor, alarm his friends, and conclude the investigation. On another, with his friend Pepys, he is freezing quicksilver with the muriate of lime and snow, or fusing platina with oxygen or charcoal. A little later, he is shut up with Humphrey Davy, enjoying his experiments in electricity; and the day following, he is at Fox's with Dr. Jenner and others, considering a paper on the cow-pox, to be read that night at Guy's. Nothing comes amiss to him. He is always ready, always laborious.

In 1801, he commenced a series of lectures to the members of the Askesian Society,\* which

\* This was the later name of the Philosophical Society before referred to.

were well attended. In 1802, he was elected a fellow of the Linnæan Society, and became, in conjunction with Dr. Babington, a lecturer on chemistry at Guy's Hospital. In 1803, he was chosen one of the presidents of the Physical Society at Guy's; and, by the advice of Davy and John Dalton, of Manchester, accepted a proposition from the Royal Institution to become one of their lecturers. At this period, the demands made upon his time and attention were unusually heavy. He was frequently referred to for chemical analysis, and called upon to perform experiments, which required not only skill and accuracy, but extensive scientific attainments. Plough Court became distinguished for the excellence of its chemical re-agents; its fame in this department extending from England to the continent. Professor Pictet, of Geneva, speaks of 'a charming collection' he had been enabled to obtain from this famous repository, and which he had exhibited to the National Institute.

The year 1804 found Mr. Allen, if possible, still more engaged. During the season of that year he delivered at the hospital forty-six lectures on chemistry, as a first course; twenty-six as a second; and fifteen on natural philosophy. Twenty-one other lectures at the Royal Institution made the total number delivered one hundred and eight.

In following years, and amid similar avocations, he contrived to engage largely in botanical studies; 'had always some French work on hand;' made considerable progress in German; paid attention to drawing; read mathematics with a tutor, and pursued astronomical observations somewhat extensively;\* although, as we shall afterwards have occasion to notice, he was at this very time engaged in an almost countless succession of philanthropic undertakings. He seems also to have been much interested in a series of *conversazioni* held at Dr. Babington's, where Count Bournon gave instructions in crystallography; and he subsequently took part with others in the formation of the Mineralogical and Geological Societies. He also became an honorary member of the Board of Agricul-

\* William Allen had, for some time, been occasionally occupied in preparing tables of the right ascension and declination of the stars, from the first to the fourth magnitude, with the places of some of the most interesting double stars. They were arranged for his own amusement, but as they seemed likely to prove useful to persons possessing a circular or transit instrument, he was induced to publish them. In this little work, entitled, *A Companion to the Transit Instrument*, the variations in right ascension and declination are given to the end of 1814. His fondness for the study of astronomy rendered his observatory a great source of gratification to him; and there, at the close of many a weary day, were his toils forgotten in the interest of *this delightful science*.

ture, and delivered lectures to the members, 'on wheel carriages,' on 'roads,' and on 'the application of mechanical principles to agricultural instruments.'

In March, 1807, he was introduced, by Earl Morton, at Sir Joseph Banks's; and in the November following was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. A paper, 'on diamonds,' prepared by Mr. Pepys and himself, was read at the meeting in June, and soon afterwards the two friends presented some valuable researches on carbon, and carbonic acid, which were printed in the Transactions, and excited much interest in the scientific world. Davy told them, that had the paper on carbonic acid been the production of one person only, the council would have voted the gold medal for it, but they found some difficulty in doing so where two parties were engaged.

Twelve years only had as yet elapsed since Mr. Allen, a plain and unknown man, had succeeded to the business at Plough Court; yet these had proved sufficient to enable him altogether to change his position in society. He was now known, appreciated, honoured. The most eminent men of the age were numbered among his personal friends. His scientific reputation was established. He was becoming distinguished as a philanthropist. Fame and wealth spread their seductions

before him; for everything he undertook prospered. All things betokened a bright if not a brilliant career. It was an hour of peril. Happily for him, he knew his weakness, and was alive to his danger. 'If I am preserved,' he says, 'from falling a victim to the world, its honours, and its friendships, I shall be inclined to consider it a miracle of mercy. Oh that my feet were permanently fixed on the sure foundation, even Jesus Christ!'

His pious mother, for whom he always manifested the most tender love, was at this time deeply anxious lest his passion for science and pursuit of knowledge should lead him away from objects of higher importance. She had long been in the habit of conveying to him in writing the religious concern she felt on his behalf, and she now addressed to him two letters, which for touching and simple beauty have, we think, seldom been surpassed.

'Thy talents, my beloved child,' pleads the unworldly, and (oh, rare excellence!) *unambitious* mother, 'if rightly directed, would tend to spread heavenly knowledge, and to extend the government of the Prince of Peace. Oh, how I long that the Most High would anoint and appoint dedicated sons, to turn the attention of men to their greatest *good*, and arouse them from their beds of

ease before the solemn sound goes forth—  
'Time shall be no longer!' He who has loved thee from thy earliest youth has called thee to love him *above all*; to dedicate thyself to him; to surrender *thy all* to him, to be made use of as he shall direct. The reins of government should not be in *thy* hands, but in *his*, to turn thee *into* the path he may in future appoint, and *out* of what thou, as a man, wouldest have chosen for thyself. Ah! my dear, it is not the strength of natural affection which leads me to say, thou wast not intended to spend all thy time in earthly pursuits, but, through submission to the operation of that power which creates anew, thou art designed to lead the minds of others, both by example and precept, from earth to heaven. I believe it may be said of thee, as it was said to Peter, 'Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat;' but I humbly hope that the same Advocate will plead for thee, that *thy faith fail not.*

On another occasion she writes—

'I entreat thee again to consider the necessity of setting thyself more at liberty in future. *Thou art too much absorbed in study, my beloved child*; for however innocent it may be, yet, like the doves in the temple, it fills up a place in the temple of thy heart, which ought to be otherwise occupied, and dedicated to the Lord, in whose hands thou wouldest become



an instrument to promote the knowledge of pure Christianity. *Come, my beloved, if a right hand or a right eye be called for, give it up.* The Lord loves a cheerful giver, and he will restore thee an hundredfold.'

The attachment which subsisted between William Allen and the excellent 'Margaret,' his ever-watchful mother and sympathizing friend, was all but romantic. Her letters were preserved as hidden treasures. He carried them in his pocket book as constant companions. In seasons of affliction and discouragement he was consoled by her sympathy, and strengthened by her counsel. In advanced life, when age and infirmities gathered about her, his attentions were unremitting. His visits to her were almost daily. His chief joy was to soothe her sufferings, or to minister to her wants. Twenty-two years after the date of the letters, and nine before her decease, for she lived to a good old age, we find him noting in his journal, that he had been to see his dear mother, who was in a sweet state of mind, and described to him some of the feelings with which she had been favoured in the night. 'I was affected,' he says, 'and told her I longed that we could *go* together, for we seemed to have a foretaste of the glory that should be revealed; but she said, 'No, no, *there is more for thee* to suffer and to do yet ;

the Lord has a work for *thee*.' In the month of January, 1830, we find him by her bedside, offering prayer that the 'blessed Saviour might be pleased to administer to her an easy entrance into his everlasting rest,' and on the 15th of that month, about seven o'clock, the 'beloved parent' sweetly 'slept in Jesus.'

Soon after this event, it appears, from his journal, that he had serious thoughts of giving up Guy's, in order to be more at liberty to serve the Great Master; but the treasurer was so 'earnest' for his continuance, that he 'could not well get at liberty.' His lectures were still crowded with students, and his energy in delivering them was unabated. It was not till the year 1826 that he finally retired from the hospital, closing his connection with it by an address to the students, which was printed, and widely circulated. In all his lectures, Mr. Allen had felt it right to urge the claims of revelation, and to avail himself of every suitable opportunity for directing the minds of his hearers to the Great Source of all wisdom and goodness; but in *this*, he enlarges on the Divine justice, impressively urges the responsibility of man, and points to the compassion of God, as having provided, 'in the person of the Redeemer, for reconciliation with himself.'

The same year that saw him retire from Guy's witnessed his anxious endeavours to

free himself from another engagement, still more complicated and responsible. We refer to his connection with Lanark.

In the year 1813, Robert Owen, then distinguished only for his benevolence, and especially honoured for the zeal and energy with which he had sought to ameliorate the condition of the labouring and manufacturing poor, came to London, in consequence of some business arrangements, which involved the sale of the Lanark Mills. The importance of continuing the plans then in progress for preserving the morals and promoting the comfort and happiness of the workpeople was strongly felt by Mr. Allen; and, 'after much conflict of mind,' 'yielding to the pressing solicitations' of beloved friends, who 'secured him from loss for one year,' and engaged to take his shares, if he subsequently 'felt uneasy,' he became a partner in the concern. The articles of partnership indicate the views and feelings of the proprietors. They provided, by distinct agreement, for the religious education of all the children of the labourers employed in the works; and it is expressly stated, 'that nothing shall be introduced tending to disparage the Christian religion, or undervalue the authority of the Holy Scriptures,'—'that no books shall be introduced into the library until they have first *been approved of at a general meeting of the*

partners,'—and 'that children shall not be employed in the mills until they shall be of such an age as that the labour shall not be prejudicial to their health.' The year following, Mr. Allen visited Lanark, 'found the arrangements with regard to the manufacturing part excellent, and even beyond expectation;' but he adds, 'Alas! Owen, with all his cleverness and benevolence, wants the *one thing*, without which, parts and acquirements and benevolence are unavailing.' The 'painful conversations' he now had with Mr. Owen greatly depressed him; he could only find comfort in the thought, that all the other partners were, like himself, determined that Mr. Owen's views should not affect the instruction of the workpeople. He speaks of 'a heavy parting' at Braxfield, for Owen was kindness itself.

Mr. Allen was now anxious to avoid the partnership, for the deed was not yet executed; but the reflection that 'it would not be generous to desert some of the other parties,'—the wide field of usefulness afforded by the control of three thousand people,—the opportunity it gave of successfully opposing 'infidel plans,'—above all, the 'sense of duty felt in the engagement,' after prayers put up, night and day, that, if it were a wrong thing, some timely check might be felt,—decided him; and he felt

peace in leaving the result in the hands of Infinite Wisdom.

As might have been expected, this connection was a source of perpetual uneasiness and anxiety. Owen published his plans in the newspapers, and appeared, more or less, to identify his partners with himself. Allen was alternately vexed, grieved, and desponding. Long and excellent letters, conversations, entreaties—all were in vain. The once promising and still amiable son-in-law of David Dale had become an avowed and determined infidel. With unwearied patience, Mr. Allen clung to the hope of winning him back again to the truth, and continued to receive him, when in London, as a guest. His apostolic mother, kindling with indignation when he appeared at her son's house, refused to remain in the same room with the denier of her Lord, and fled from his presence with grief and shame.

In the year 1818, fresh rumours of infidelity at Lanark reached London, and the partners at once determined to visit the mills, to spend a week or two among the people, and to ascertain, by strict personal investigation and inquiry, whether Mr. Owen's opinions had or had not spread amongst them. The visit, to a great extent, relieved their anxieties. They ascertained from the ministers in the neighbourhood that sceptical opinions had taken

no root among the population ; they received very favourable accounts of the morals of the people, and were delighted to discover in the general superintendent of the works a truly religious man. They also found a Bible Society established, to which both Mr. Owen and his family subscribed. Before they left, the people were called together : an admirable address, which was afterwards printed, and freely circulated among them, was delivered by Mr. Allen, and a deputation from the people expressed their gratitude.

In 1822, fresh difficulties arose. Owen came to London with new schemes, and unabated, if not increased hostility to revelation. Mr. Allen speaks of himself as being ‘ rendered miserable,’—makes up his mind ‘ to have no more discussions with Robert Owen, that being clearly a waste of time,’ and again meditates withdrawing from the concern. Another visit of inspection now took place, followed by a kind and earnest letter to Owen, praying *for* him, but determining to part *from* him ; an event which, deferred from time to time by difficulties incident to the disposal of so large a concern, was at length, in 1828, happily accomplished.

## CHAP. III.

### PHILANTHROPY.—ALWAYS ABOUNDING.

THE first intimation we have in Mr. Allen's journal of philanthropic movement is found under date of December, 1796, when he purposes, if he can get a little more at liberty, to lay some plan for the amelioration of the state of the poor. The following year, about the same time, William Phillips and himself united to form what was long after known as 'The Spitalfields Soup Society.' Into this scheme he threw himself heart and soul. A large and effective committee was formed; liberal contributions were secured; and a vast amount of suffering was alleviated, at a comparatively small cost. In March, 1798, his name was proposed on the committee of 'The Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor;' but he is 'in a strait about it,' as many of the members are of the nobility, and he is 'fearful' that he 'may not keep his place as a *Friend*.' This difficulty was, however, soon overcome; no one being disposed to quarrel with the peculiarities of the Society to which he belonged. In 1800 and 1801, the Soup Society was again in operation, (bread was then sometimes seventeen-pence *halfpenny* the quartern loaf, and all other food

proportionably dear;) and day after day is devoted to 'the soup-house,' 'the soup committee,' 'domiciliary visits to the poor,' and such like labours of love.

Mr. Allen does not appear to have been actually elected a member of the committee for the abolition of the slave-trade until May, 1805, but in spirit he was united with it from his youth up.\* His intimacy with Clarkson commenced in 1794, Plough Court being frequently the home of 'that apostle of humanity,' when in town, on the business of the slave-trade. In 1841, he paid his last visit to Playford Hall. They were then both old men, and they spent a happy hour in discoursing on old times. At parting, Allen, deeply affected could only say, 'The Lord bless thee!' Clarkson wept. They had been friends for half a century, and they had a mutual conviction that they should meet no more on earth.

\* The little band of labourers who first formed themselves into a committee, to promote the great work of abolition, were—William Dillwyn, George Harrison, Samuel Hoare, Thomas Knowles, M.D., John Lloyd, and Joseph Woods. Their first meeting was held in 1783. The mode they pursued was, enlightening the public mind, and some of their efforts proved highly useful. In 1787 a society was formed upon a more extended scale, when the names of Granville Sharpe, Thomas Clarkson, and several others, were added to the *committee*.



The date of Mr. Allen's first introduction to Wilberforce is not given. He dines with him, apparently for the first time, in August, 1805, where he meets with Charles Grant, and others. From this time an intimacy subsisted between them which lasted for life. On the 30th July, 1833, Mr. Allen notes in his diary, 'Yesterday, died William Wilberforce.' 'His warfare is accomplished; his course is finished; he kept the faith. Those who regard him merely as a philanthropist, in the worldly sense of that abused term, know but little of his character; his philanthropy took its origin in love to God, it was kindled at the sacred fire of Divine love, and it burned with such bright and steady lustre only because it was duly replenished from its hallowed source.' \*

In July, 1808, a party of seven† dined together in Plough Court, and formed 'The Society for diffusing Information on the Subject of Punishment by Death;' Basil Montague undertaking to open a communication with Sir Samuel Romilly on the subject. Mr. Allen's anxiety for the amelioration of the criminal code was very great, and his efforts on behalf of criminals condemned

\* These observations were *adopted* from a brief obituary of the deceased.

† Basil Montague, Thomas Furley, B. M. Forster, R. Phillips, F. Smith, J. G. Bevan, and Luke Howard.

to die for comparatively slight offences were always unwearied and frequently successful. It is difficult to believe now, that so late as 1813 the greatest efforts were necessary to prevent the extreme sentence of the law from being carried into effect on a poor wretch, not twenty-two years of age, extremely ignorant, unable either to read or write, and exhibiting no indications of a ferocious disposition,—who, it seems, crept in at the window of a house, stole property to the amount of a few shillings, and withdrew without any attempt to commit a personal injury. Yet this was the fact. Well might Mr. Allen, writing, as a last resource, a long personal letter to Lord Sidmouth, indignantly exclaim, ‘ Shall a person,—to whom, be it remembered, society has failed in its duty, by suffering him to grow up in ignorance,—for the crime of stealing to the amount of a few shillings, and without any aggravating circumstances, suffer the very same punishment which you inflict upon him who has been guilty of the most barbarous murder, and, in short, endure the greatest punishment which one human being can inflict upon another? To reform the guilty, and to restore them as useful members of the community, is a glorious triumph of humanity, and marks a state rising in the scale of civilization; but to have no other resource than the punishment of death reminds me of the

miserable subterfuge of a barbarous age, barren in expedients to save, strong only to destroy.'

It is gratifying to know that this appeal was successful. 'I am glad,' says Mr. Allen, in a letter to Sir Robert Harry Inglis, 'that this affair has given me an opportunity of being better acquainted with Lord Sidmouth's real character, of which, from what I have seen myself, I shall think more highly than ever.'

Early in the year 1813 Mr. Allen was planning the establishment of 'Savings Banks.' 'Hast thou' (he writes to Richard Reynolds, of Bristol,) 'turned thy attention to the subject of a bank for the poor, in which their little savings of threepence or sixpence a week might accumulate for their benefit? I have consulted Morgan, the great calculator, and he is to sketch me a plan.' Three years afterwards (January the 20th, 1816,) he notes, 'Charles Barclay, Charles Dudley, and Robert Stevens, met me at Plough Court, on the subject of savings banks for the poor, and we laid the first stone of the building.'

On the 13th of February, 1814, Wilberforce calls upon him, and states that 'he has heard that the Lascars and Chinese kept at Ratcliff had been very ill used.' Would Clarkson and himself see what could be done? This was *enough*. Away he flies to the rescue of these

unfortunate strangers. An order was immediately obtained, to visit and inspect the barracks where two hundred were lodged ; and a ‘Lascar Society’ is immediately founded. The committee meet regularly at Plough Court ; Mr. Wontner, of the Minorities, and other humane inhabitants of the district, having kindly undertaken to act on behalf of these poor creatures. The same year he is assisting in the formation of ‘the Peace Society,’ and in 1815 projecting an institution for the reformation of juvenile criminals.

But there is literally no end of his devices for doing good. The diary groans under his activities. The very pages become heavy and oppressed with the ever returning record of conferences, committees, and appointments. We shall therefore only add, that in June, 1816, ‘with the sole object of stimulating to virtue and active benevolence, by pointing out to those who have the disposition and the power the means of gratifying the best feelings of the heart, and to show that all, even the poorest, may render material assistance in ameliorating the condition of man,’ he established, and with the help of friends conducted, a periodical entitled the ‘Philanthropist.’ This journal, which was warmly supported by Clarkson, Brougham, William Crawford, and many other benevolent individuals, was continued till 1820, having by *that time* extended to seven octavo volumes.

To the promotion of popular education, Mr. Allen, it is well known, was through life zealously devoted. In mentioning the first visit he paid to Lancaster's school, in the Borough Road, he says, 'I can never forget the impression which the scene made upon me. Here I beheld a thousand children collected from the streets, where they were learning nothing but mischief, all reduced to the most perfect order, and training to habits of subordination and usefulness, while learning the great truths of the gospel from the Bible. The feelings of the spectator while contemplating the results which might take place in this country and the world in general, by the extension of the system thus brought into practice by this meritorious young man, were overpowering, and found vent in tears of joy.'

In the year 1808, Lancaster resigned his affairs, which were then sadly embarrassed, into the hands of trustees; and on the formation of the British and Foreign School Society, which took place in the course of that year, Mr. Allen became treasurer.\* His advances for some years after the appointment were heavy, and frequently under circumstances which involved risk of repayment. An extraordinary effort was required to raise funds for the liquidation of the debt

\* *This office he sustained for thirty-five years.*

with which the Society was encumbered, and it was at length only accomplished by enormous sacrifices of time on the part of a few individuals. The misunderstanding which soon after sprang up between Lancaster and his trustees greatly aggravated a burden which had already become nearly insupportable.

The first thing needed was a regular set of books, and properly arranged accounts. These Mr. Allen undertook to prepare, and he speaks of 'labouring as hard in unravelling matters' as ever he did in his own concerns. This, however, was but the beginning of trouble. The books and accounts arranged, and a sufficient sum of money raised on loan at five per cent., to place the establishment on a permanent basis, subscriptions had to be secured, expenditure reduced, operations systematized, buildings erected, a society in name to be made a society in fact; and all had to be effected under a load of obloquy, and in the face of unceasing misrepresentation. A work like this required years of labour, and the diary bears witness that *years* were cheerfully devoted to it.

In 1811, notes occur to this effect:—'Very much overdone this week. I think school concerns altogether have taken up nearly three days.' Again, in 1812, 'Of all the concerns that I have anything to do with, the

Lancasterian lies the most heavily on my mind.' Again, in 1814, 'Busy at school accounts, much exhausted.' And thus on he went, day after day, week after week, year after year. School meetings, canvassings for money, journeys, and foreign correspondence, regularly alternated with lectures, experiments, business, and social obligations; and it is sometimes difficult to say which received the closest and most constant attention.

It is pleasant to observe, in the midst of these engrossing labours, a not unfrequent recurrence to higher and more spiritual considerations; and we think we can sometimes trace a sort of secret link between the daily trial and the evening meditation. After a weary day, spent in thankless efforts to do good, how touching is the following record! — 'Still under depression; my little stock of faith almost exhausted; and yet I can humbly say, in the multitude of things which harass my mind, the main object is the good of others; for this I have in great measure given up my own gratification, for if instead of these things my time were devoted to philosophical pursuits and experiments, to which I am naturally so prone, the path to honour and distinction stands fair before me. May the sacrifice be accepted above!' We could almost imagine, on reading these lines, that the *voice of his mother* was even then sounding

in his ears the tender appeal—‘Come, my beloved, if a right hand or a right eye be called for, give it up. The Lord loves a cheerful giver, and he will restore thee an hundredfold.’

The deep personal attachment which subsisted between the parties engaged in the propagation of Lancaster’s plans was both singular and sustaining. Fox writes to Allen, ‘Let us cheer each other; we shall reap, if we faint not. In the whole of the struggle my mind has been supported by a consciousness of the close fellowship of heart which was ever to be found in you, and I hope that so long as we are spared in this present sphere of action we shall be like Jonathan and David.’ Allen notes, ‘Dear Fox and I traced the gracious support of Divine Providence under the work, and were comforted.’ In writing to him, he says, ‘No great and important object was ever attained without considerable exertion; but when we are associated with those we love, as I firmly believe is the case in the present instance, we may, perhaps, adopt the lines of Cowper:—

‘And one in heart, in purpose, and design,  
Gird up each other to the race divine.’”

So, in writing to Joseph Foster, an excellent man, to whom he was united by the strongest ties of personal regard, and the value of whose long-continued labours in the



school cause it would be impossible to over-estimate, he says, 'I have often been very thankful in having such a coadjutor as thou art. I do not think we have entered into the work altogether in our own will, and humbly trust that we may be made instrumental in doing much good.'

School affairs, at this crisis, brought Mr. Allen into almost constant communication with members of the royal family, and other distinguished persons. The acquaintance with the Duke of Kent thus commenced, eventually ripened into mutual and sincere regard. His Royal Highness frequently consulted Mr. Allen confidentially in relation to his own personal affairs, treated him as an attached friend, and subsequently induced him to act officially on his behalf. The duke's grateful sense of his services was from time to time expressed in very gratifying terms.

In 1823, Mr. Allen is recording thoughts, as to the best method of 'making an inroad upon the present demoralizing system of paying agricultural labourers out of the poor's rate, by building cottages for them, and giving them some land;' and, in 1824, we find him, while lodging at Brighton, going over to Lindfield to procure ground for the establishment of a school of industry. In 1825, he erected commodious school-rooms for boys, girls, and *infants*, with workshops adjoining. To these

schools, in which three teachers were employed, lending libraries were attached. Some of the elder boys were engaged, during a portion of the day, on the school-farm, under a skilful husbandman; some in a printing-office, and others in different works of manual labour. The girls were taught needlework and knitting, and the infants learnt to make patchwork, and to plait straw.

Soon after the establishment of these schools, an old friend of Mr. Allen's, the late John Smith, M.P., of Dale Park, visited the place, and, approving the object, purchased the estate of Graveley, consisting of about a hundred acres, in the immediate neighbourhood of Lindfield, and subsequently built upon it eighteen cottages for labourers, with an acre-and-a-quarter of land to each. Seven other cottages, with from five to six acres each, were also erected, and a small house, as an occasional residence for Mr. Allen. Here he spent no inconsiderable portion of his later years. It was his favourite retreat, the chosen spot to which he always retired when fatigued with the bustle and business of London. Here, too, he enjoyed a longer period of domestic felicity than had been his lot during any portion of his previous history. After the decease of his daughter, in 1827, he became, for the third time, a married man, uniting himself with Mrs. Birkbeck, a widow

lady, of the Society of Friends, with whom he had long been on terms of intimate friendship. This union, which proved a very happy one, lasted for eight years, when it was terminated by her death, which took place in 1835.

A pamphlet 'on the manner of cultivating different articles, with directions for the rotation of crops,' which he published here, under the title of 'Colonies at Home,' has passed through several editions; and another, 'On the Means of Diminishing the Poor's Rate,' was favourably received at the time of its appearance. A 'cottage society,' which he succeeded in establishing, and which was afterwards entitled 'The Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes,' also effected much good. After long-continued effort, and many a struggle with prejudice and supineness, his persevering exertions at length produced an obvious effect upon the habits of the people. The appearance of the children became more orderly and respectable; the dwellings of the cottagers presented comforts to which the poor man had hitherto been a stranger; and many were withdrawn from dependence on the parish, in consequence of the allotment of land enabling them to provide for their families by their own industry. The Duke of Sussex, the Earl of Chichester, Lord Brougham, *Lord John Russell*, and many other noble-

men and gentlemen, visited him at the cottage, and expressed their interest in his plans. Mr. Allen himself always regarded the experiment at Lindfield as being, in an economical view, a successful one. Many of his most judicious friends considered it to be, in that respect, a failure. The true state of things may probably be gathered from two very significant lines in his journal, under date of October 29, 1834. 'I leave Lindfield,' he says, '*this time* with a pleasing conviction that all the tenants are *in a way* to pay their rents.' Whether they did actually pay them is not recorded. We doubt not that, under any circumstances, their slumbers were undisturbed by dread of ejection or distress warrant. When told that he was too sanguine and too enthusiastic, his reply was, 'It is very possible that I am too sanguine. I remember what Charles James Fox said in the House of Commons, when the friends of the slave-merchants within those walls charged the abolitionists with enthusiasm—turning to the Speaker, he exclaimed, 'Enthusiasm, sir! why, there never was any good done in the world without enthusiasm.' We must feel warm upon our projects, otherwise, from the discouragements we are sure to meet with here, they will drop through.'

On this principle he acted through life.

## CHAP. IV.

### MINISTRY.—PRISONS AND PALACES.

AT what precise period William Allen first began to speak 'in ministry' does not appear. It would seem, however, not to have been before the year 1818. But, although at first unemployed officially, his attention to the claims of the religious society with which he was connected had from his earliest years, and during his busiest seasons, been most exemplary. In 1799, we find him appointed a corresponding member\* of the 'Meeting for Sufferings,' for Derby and Nottinghamshire.

In 1811, he is set apart to the station of 'overseer.'† 'I am afraid to refuse,' he

\* The Yearly Meeting of London, in 1675, appointed a meeting to be held in that city, for the purpose of advising and assisting Friends in cases of suffering for conscience' sake. It is composed of men Friends, under the name of correspondents, chosen by the several Quarterly Meetings. Approved ministers are also members. It was called the Meeting for Sufferings, in consequence of its original purpose. It is considered as a standing committee of the Yearly Meeting, and to its care is entrusted whatever may arise during the intervals of that meeting, affecting the Society, or requiring immediate attention.

† The discipline of the Society of Friends directs that, if practicable, some of their members, whose con-

says, 'lest I should shrink from a duty, and thereby bring greater spiritual poverty upon myself. My prayer is, to be preserved from doing any harm, if I can do no good.' In 1813, he is chosen 'an elder;' and the year following, he is 'constrained to utter' a few words, 'which humbled' him 'exceedingly.'

In 1814, the general peace brought the allied sovereigns on a visit to London, when the Society of Friends hastened to present addresses to the Emperor of Russia and to the King of Prussia. That for the Emperor of Russia was left with Count Lieven, on the 18th of June, and the next day William Allen called to arrange for its reception. To his surprise, however, instead of obtaining a formal interview, he found the Count in his carriage, who bade him get in, and, driving off immediately, informed him that the Emperor wished to attend a Friends' meeting, and that there was no time for it but the present.

Calling at Count Nesselrode's for the Emperor, the Grand Duchess of Oldenburgh, the Duke of Oldenburgh, and the Duke of Wurtemberg, the whole party drove off, with-

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duct and conversation manifest 'the fruits of the Spirit,' be appointed to exercise a general care and oversight of all the individuals who constitute the particular meeting to which they belong. The persons thus appointed are denominated *Overseers*.

out the slightest previous intimation, to the nearest meeting-house then open. No commotion was excited by their arrival. They were quietly shown to the seats usually occupied by men and women respectively. The meeting remained in silence about a quarter of an hour, 'in which time,' says Mr. Allen, 'my mind was sweetly calmed and refreshed, in the firm belief that the Great Master had the work in his own hands.' Richard Phillips then stood up, with a short but acceptable address to the meeting; and soon after, John Wilkinson was engaged in explaining the effects of vital religion, and the nature of true worship. After he sat down, John Bell uttered a few sentences, and John Wilkinson concluded in supplication. The Emperor and the whole party conducted themselves with great seriousness; and 'after meeting' they kindly shook hands with the Friends, and departed.

Two days after this, the Emperor received Mr. Allen and the deputation, with the 'Friends' address. The number was very limited, in accordance with Count Lieven's instructions. Alexander received them alone, and conversed freely with them in English; asking questions, which 'evidently showed that he was acquainted with the operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul.' He said he 'agreed entirely with Friends on the subject

of worship.' He told them that he was himself in the habit of daily prayer, that at first he employed a form of words, but at length grew uneasy in so doing, as the words were not always applicable to the present state of his mind, and that 'now the subject of his prayer was according to the impression he felt of his wants at the time.' He stated how 'the Lord had made him acquainted with spiritual religion,' after which he had much sought it, and that 'herein he found strength and consolation;' adding, that he, and 'all of us, were only placed in this life to glorify God, and to be useful to one another.' During the interview, he repeatedly pressed their hands, expressed a wish to know more of them, said he should like to see a Friend's house, and concluded by observing, that if any Friends should visit Petersburg on a religious account, they were not to wait for any introduction, but to come direct to him, and he would do everything to promote their views.

The 'wish to see a Friend's house' was not forgotten. When at Portsmouth he again reverted to it, and arrangements were made for John Glaisyer, of Brighton, to receive him. But when he reached that town, the crowd was so great, that he was obliged to proceed without fulfilling his intentions. Passing a farm-house, a few miles from Lewes, however, he observed two persons standing at



their own gate, who, by their appearance, he supposed to be Friends. He immediately ordered the driver to stop, alighted, inquired if they were of the people called Quakers, and, being answered in the affirmative, asked permission to go into the house. The request, although considered exceedingly strange and unaccountable, for these parties had not heard anything of the Emperor's interest in Friends, was of course cheerfully complied with. The Duchess then alighted, and they all went in together. After a little time, the Duchess asked if they might go over the house, and they were accordingly conducted into the principal apartments, the neatness of which they praised. On returning to the parlour, they were invited to take some refreshments, which they did, and seemed pleased with the attention. Finding that the family had not heard of the Emperor having had any communication with 'Friends' in London, he gave them an account of his having been 'at meeting.' At parting, the Emperor saluted the hand of the lady, and the Duchess kissed her. They then both shook hands cordially with her husband (Nathaniel Rickman), and bade them 'farewell.'

In 1818, Mr. Allen was recognised as an approved minister among Friends, and in that character he visited the families of his *district*. On Thursday, the 11th of May,

1820, 'in solemn conference,' he was 'discharged from the office of elder,' and 'recorded as a minister in unity.' It was *as a minister*, and 'under religious concern,' that he subsequently undertook his various and important journeys.

The *first* journey, undertaken in 1816, was in some respects an exception to the statement we have made, inasmuch as on this occasion he seems to have travelled chiefly in the capacity of 'care-taker' to some women friends, whose 'concern' the journey properly was. They crossed to Calais, and then proceeded through Belgium and Holland to Pyrmont, Hesse Cassel, Frankfort, Strasburg, and Basle; everywhere inspecting prisons, schools, and public institutions generally.

Fellenberg, whom they saw at Hoffwyll, is described as 'a man whose countenance and manner strikingly indicates great mental power, openness of character, and benignity.' Soon afterwards they visited Pestalozzi. 'The lively old man,' says Mr. Allen, 'saluted me with two kisses, one on each cheek. He is rather below the middle stature, and thin. A spirit of harmony seemed to pervade the whole establishment. I was much pleased.'

At Geneva, Mr. Allen was again plunged in sorrow, by the decease of his second wife, Charlotte Hanbury, to whom he was affec-

tionately attached. She was interred in the cemetery at Sacconet, and soon after the party returned home.

The *second* and most important journey occupied him from August, 1818, to February, 1820, and embraced Northern Europe, with some portions of Turkey, Greece, and Malta.

Accompanied by his friend, Stephen Grellet,\* Mr. Allen sailed from Harwich, on the 15th of August, for Stavanger, in Norway. On the 25th they were approaching the coast, and ranges of high and rugged rocks, one beyond the other, presented themselves. Here they landed, and established 'a system of discipline' among some of the inhabitants who recognise the religious principles of the Society of Friends.

The voyage to Christiansand was very tedious: the wind boisterous and contrary, the country 'a picture of desolation.' The land journey to Christiana was arduous and fatiguing, sometimes 'beaten by the roads,' six horses could not force along the carriage. On one occasion men and horses are alike 'used up,' obliged to pass the night by the roadside, 'the face of the country resembling *waves*;' in fact, 'huge {masses of rock from two hundred to five hundred feet high, mostly

\* An eminent minister of the Society of Friends; a *native of France*, but resident at Burlington, United States.

covered with pines, and in constant succession.' Finally, the 'roads improve,' and the 'country becomes beautiful, resembling Switzerland.'

Proceeding to Stockholm, the two Friends had an interview with the King of Sweden, to whom they presented an address on prison discipline, education, the management of the poor, and religious liberty. They were afterwards admitted to a private conference, and in about an hour obtained all the privileges they wished for 'Friends' in Norway and Sweden. The King was most kind and cordial. 'While I was holding his hand, to take leave,' says Mr. Allen, 'in the love which I felt for him, I expressed my desire that the Lord would bless and preserve him. It seemed to go to his heart, and he presented his cheek for me to kiss, first one, then the other; he took the same leave of Stephen and Enoch (a Norwegian), and commended himself to our prayers.'

Soon after this interview they embarked for Finland. The prison at Abo was found in sad condition, and notes were made which led to the speedy removal of the evils complained of. While at Abo, they dined with a large party at the archbishop's. At the 'pause' after dinner, Grellet gave a religious address, and they separated under a mutual feeling of regard and esteem.

On the 12th of November, the travellers arrived at the outposts of Petersburg, the snow everywhere on the ground, and the roads rough. Here they found Walter Venning, Dr. Paterson, and many other friends, to cheer and welcome them.

Their first formal visit (the Emperor being absent) was to Prince Alexander Galitzin; then to Lord Cathcart; and afterwards to the Princess Sophia Mestchersky. Everybody received them gladly. The Lord set before them 'an open door.' Mr. Allen describes his visits to the Princess Sophia as visits to 'a sister and dear Christian friend.' She conversed without the least restraint on religious subjects, and gave evidence of true piety and deep understanding. The following description is given of the interior of her palace, in the depth of Russian winter :—

'The large room has a very lofty ceiling, and is just like a shrubbery. There are some fine tall trees in boxes, and very pretty trellis-work, covered with a beautiful creeper from New Holland; the plants are all evergreens, and in a healthy, flourishing state; among them are cages of singing birds, some of which are of magnificent plumage; and there was one elegant pair of Indian sparrows. Their stoves, and their universal system of double windows, keep up a uniform and very agreeable temperature throughout all the apart-

ments and even passages of a Russian house. The princess's apartment is so large, and so much divided by shrubs and trellis-work, that two or three parties might converse at the same time without interrupting each other.'

Dining with the minister of the interior at a large party, Papof, the confidential secretary of Prince Galitzin, sat next to Mr. Allen, and entered freely into religious conversation. Papof talked like 'an experienced Christian.' He 'spoke feelingly of seasons of desertion and dryness, in which he said that all he could do was to come to the Saviour with the appeal, 'Thou knowest that I love thee. If I perish, I perish, but it shall be at thy feet. I have no hope but in thee; and if thou wilt not look upon me any more, I must still love thee.' But then he sweetly remarked, that after these deep trials the light of the Lord's countenance shone upon him again, and he went on his way rejoicing.'

Prince Galitzin, himself, was not less sensible of the necessity and value of experimental piety. He repeatedly sent for the two strangers, entered into their plans, urged them to communicate freely with him at all times, and sometimes united with them in prayer for the Divine blessing upon their labours. Michael, the metropolitan of the Greek church, who received them 'in a robe

of purple silk, ornamented with stars, and a cap enriched by a cross set in diamonds,' kept them in conversation at the monastery for four hours, and chiefly on religious subjects. He professed his belief, that through the teaching of the Holy Spirit alone could men come to a knowledge of the truth, and he finally parted with them as the best of friends. Everywhere there appeared to be a disposition to promote religion, and to countenance benevolent effort for the poor.

The public institutions in St. Petersburg were found to be generally 'well managed;' the Lunatic Asylum, 'a superb establishment;' and the large Hospital distinguished 'for general neatness and cleanliness,' to a degree rarely equalled, never surpassed. The military schools, then but recently established, were in a good state of discipline, but very deficient in lessons for instruction. Some were taken from infidel writers of the French school; others, of better character, were ill arranged and unsuitable. Mr. Allen at once perceived the vast importance of promoting the extension of education in Russia, and of substituting, in place of useless or absolutely mischievous compilations, a volume of selections from the Holy Scriptures; and to the accomplishment of this object he devoted himself with characteristic energy. The *opposition* he met with was great; and it arose

in quarters where it might least have been expected.

Frequently had he to combat the argument so often refuted, that learning, being an instrument of power, should be kept from the poor, lest they should make a bad use of it. Again and again had he to show, that the ground taken by the opponents of popular instruction was fatal to the progress of all civilization; and times without number had he to urge the inconsistency of looking for good from the circulation of the Scriptures among the people, while thirty millions of them were unable to read a single letter. The determination of the Emperor, always in advance of those who surrounded him, at length settled the question, and the work was commenced without an hour's subsequent delay. Dr. Paterson, the two Vennings, and Mr. Swan, of the London Missionary Society, assisted in the compilation, and, with Mr. Allen, 'literally worked at it night and day.' In rather more than a fortnight they had the book ready to lay before the Emperor, who was so delighted with it, that he immediately ordered 8000 roubles (£1400) to be paid for an edition. This volume was soon after translated into modern Greek, French, and Italian; and in the English form has ever since been the selection used in all the schools of the British and Foreign School Society.



The conduct of the Emperor, on his return to the capital, was in perfect harmony with his professions when in England. He received his visitors without ceremony; conversed with them in the openness of friendship; asked for notes of all they had seen; knelt down and united with them in prayer; and at parting kissed their hands in token of affectionate esteem. In the course of conversation, he told them 'how early he had been favoured with touches of Divine love in his mind,' though 'he did not know from whence they came,' and was at the time 'surrounded by persons entirely ignorant of these things;' how 'he and his brother Constantine, with whom he slept, used to pray extempore, and had comfort in it;' how 'these impressions were dissipated;' how 'he had imbibed French principles;' and how, in 1812, 'he had, for the first time, read the Bible,' recognised 'the witness it bore to the operations of the Holy Spirit in his soul,' and 'found peace' in believing. Prince Galitzin, with equal frankness, described his own religious course; how he was brought to see the emptiness of mere forms, and the inestimable value of true Christianity. He said the Emperor and himself had been brought up as playfellows together, and were exposed to the same disadvantages, in being surrounded by *irreligious* persons. He told them that the

Emperor took his Bible with him in the campaign of 1812, and read in it every day. He also gave them many interesting details about the Holy Alliance,\* and the astonishment of the Emperor's own court when they heard the decree read.

Cheered and refreshed as Mr. Allen must naturally have been by much that he saw in Petersburg, his residence there was far from being agreeable, in consequence of the great depression of mind to which he was at this period subject. He frequently speaks of himself as 'in mental bonds,' as 'deeply tried in spirit,' 'needing much faith to remain,' feeling as it were 'shut up in prison,' longing for home, and so on. Expressions of this cha-

\* A copy is preserved amongst William Allen's manuscripts of the manifesto which announces what has been denominated the 'Holy Alliance,' published at Petersburg, under date, 'January 10th, 1816,' which expresses the determination of the Emperor Alexander, and that of his allies, the Emperor of Austria, and the King of Prussia, to 'endeavour to regulate their future conduct by the principles of the gospel.' It also declares their conviction, that the Christian nations, of which they and their people form a part, have, in reality, no other sovereign than Him to whom alone power really belongs, God, our Divine Saviour. They, therefore, recommend to their people, with the most tender solicitude, as the sole means of enjoying that peace which alone is durable, to strengthen themselves every day, more and more, in the principles, and in the exercise of the duties, which the Divine Saviour has taught mankind.

racter are frequent in the journal. The 'nicely warmed rooms' only make him think of his mother, and wish she could have her house made equally comfortable; and letters from his daughter can scarcely be read for tears. 'Thou art my beloved child,' he writes to her, 'doubly dear to me, dear by the closest ties of nature, and even still dearer by that precious union of spirit which is produced by religious feeling. I am sometimes obliged to wipe my eyes, in order to get on with reading thy letters.' His valued friend and companion, Mr. Grellet, was at these seasons a great comfort to him, strengthening him after the labours of the day, both by conversation and prayer. On one of these evenings, when they had been undisturbed by visitors, he says, 'After supper, dear Stephen and I had some very edifying conversation; my mind was low and tender, and after we had sat some time, he engaged in supplication. On taking leave to retire to my own room, I remarked, 'The Master has been kind to us this evening; let us repose in his love.' 'Fearing the Lord, they 'spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard,' and gave them peace.

In March, 1819, the travellers, after suitably acknowledging the great kindness they had received from Lord and Lady Cathcart, and Sir John Wylie, took leave of the Ven-

nings and their other beloved friends, and finally left Petersburg for Odessa and Constantinople, by way of Moscow. Travelling onwards, with three horses in the kabitska, or sledge; the course of the road shown only by branches of pine, stuck in at certain distances; the snow drifting and covering holes of above four feet deep, into which they often plumped, without the slightest warning; sometimes, as at Novgorod, sleeping on a wolf-skin, for Russian landlords then provided no beds; sometimes obliged to pull up, and lie quietly by the road side till break of day; they at length reached Tver in safety. At this place, where they had letters to the governor, they remained a few days, visiting prisons, and seeking to promote education. 'It has been a portion of our duty here,' says Mr. Allen, 'as in other places, to visit and to enter into feeling with the afflicted, and with the outcasts of society, by which our spirits have been much depressed. Our service leads us to dungeons as well as to palaces, and we feel the force of those words of the apostle, 'We are debtors to all men.' It is a consolation, however, to know that this trial of our feelings is not in vain, and that our representations to the proper authorities *have* proved the means of alleviating much human misery.'

From Tver they proceeded to Moscow,

where similar engagements presented themselves. The public institutions, chiefly through the zeal and energy of the Empress-mother, were in admirable order. Of this extraordinary woman, Mr. Allen says, and he is not given to extravagance, 'I have not heard of any woman in the world, who is so heartily, so incessantly, and so extensively engaged in works of benevolence as the worthy mother of the good Alexander.' From Moscow a report was forwarded to the Emperor, containing observations on what they had seen, and suggestions calculated to promote the great objects of their journey.

By the end of April they had left Moscow, and were on their way over the Steppes of Tartary, to visit the German colonies of Mennonites, on the banks of the Dnieper. It is pleasant to find, that as they journeyed, they observed, and not unfrequently in the villages, the women, neatly dressed, collected before their cottages in little groups, singing; and, whatever may be the disadvantages of Russian rule, it is satisfactory to learn that it rarely, if ever, happens that anybody is starved. For a single penny, a peasant can obtain as much black bread as he can eat.

On their arrival at the colonies, they were very warmly received by General Contineas, the military superintendent, a sensible and *religious* man, who kindly undertook to in-

terpret for them at their religious meetings. This believing centurion, after their return to England, opened a correspondence with Mr. Allen, which was continued until his death, in 1830.

After leaving the colonies, they proceeded to Simferopol, to visit the 'Malakans, or Spiritual Christians.' Many of these had suffered persecution in consequence of their separation from the Greek church, and many, particularly the Cossacks, languished for a long time in prison. They, however, firmly maintained their ground. They prefer the Holy Scriptures to all other writings, considering them as the rule of their faith, and as containing the revealed will of God to man. Though not rich, they have paid as much as seventy roubles (upwards of £13) for a copy of the sacred volume. They acknowledge Christ as 'God manifest in the flesh,' who died on the cross for the sins of the world. They reject pictures or images, and the adoration of saints. In their assemblies the Bible is read and explained. Yet,—such is man, everywhere the same,—'though most of them love the truth,' they divide and separate on unimportant points, forgetting *that* love which is the 'fulfilling of the law.' With these people the two Friends held meetings, and through an interpreter exhorted and instructed them. From hence they proceeded

through Cherson to Odessa, where they embarked for Constantinople.

On the 1st of August they sailed by the boat for Scio (then the most prosperous portion of Greece), and on the Third-day, about nine in the morning, came in sight of the island. The visit was a satisfactory one; the Greek archbishop consenting to become the president of a school society, and Professor Bambas undertaking to translate and print the Scripture lessons. On the 14th, they hired a boat to take them to Athens, and endured many privations and perils during a protracted voyage of eleven days. Here they were refreshed by the voice and welcome of Dr. Pinkerton. They remained a fortnight, doing what they could, and then set out for Corinth. From hence they proceeded to Patras and Zante, where, after a short quarantine, they landed, and were heartily welcomed by Colonel (now Major-General Sir Patrick) Ross. Here Mr. Allen was attacked by fever, and, during a severe and dangerous illness of some weeks, received attentions from Colonel Ross and his lady, whose kindness he ever after spoke of with love and gratitude. A sincere attachment to him was cherished by the colonel; and a beautiful letter addressed by the daughter of Sir Patrick, twenty-five years afterwards, to

one of the editors, describes the deep feeling with which he heard of his friend's decease.

After visiting Corfu and Malta, and subsequently Rome, Milan, Geneva, and Paris, Mr. Allen arrived at home on the 26th of February, 1820, having been absent about a year and a half.

The *third* journey was to Vienna and Verona, in 1822, and was undertaken chiefly for the purpose of again meeting the Emperor of Russia, and endeavouring to interest him in the cause of the poor Greeks, and in the abolition of slavery. He reached Vienna on the 27th of September, and was immediately sent for by Alexander. The interview was long and satisfactory; the Emperor encouraged him to speak freely; and in succession the German colonies, schools, the slave-trade, and the condition of the Greeks, were severally discussed. During a second visit, the Emperor urged him to go to Verona, where he again met him twice, and entered fully and warmly into his various benevolent projects. In the course of these interviews, entire hours were occupied in religious conversation and in social worship. The Emperor spoke much of trials known only to himself and God; of temptations under which he could find no relief except in the promise, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' and of sorrows which



drove him continually to a throne of grace. After these conversations they sat in silence, prayed, and parted. On the 31st of October, Mr. Allen waited upon him to take leave. After describing a lengthened conversation, he adds, 'It was now between nine and ten o'clock, but we seemed loth to part. When I rose, he embraced and kissed me three times, saying, 'Remember me to your family; I should like to know them. Ah! when and where shall we meet again!' They never saw each other more; the death of Alexander, which took place in 1825, putting an end to this singular friendship between a Russian Emperor and an English tradesman, a powerful despot and a plain Friend.

During Mr. Allen's stay at Verona, Prince Esterhazy, the Crown Prince of Sweden, and the Duke of Wellington, all treated him with the greatest kindness and attention. The Duke, who seems to have entertained a sincere respect for his character, asked him to dinner, to meet some of the eminent persons then assembled at the Congress; but Mr. Allen, with characteristic humility, declined the invitation, stating that 'where duty did not call, he believed it was his place rather to remain in the shade.' The Duke, who saw at a glance his reasons for refusing, immediately told him with similar frankness, that he *believed he was right*. In following years, Mr.

Allen several times records with satisfaction 'the noble conduct' of the Duke of Wellington, to whom, as well as to Mr. Canning and Earl Bathurst, he always felt under deep personal obligations.

Leaving Verona, he next proceeded to Turin, where he found the British minister had just received instructions from Mr. Canning to report to the Duke of Wellington, then at Verona, on the state of the Waldenses, who were at that time exposed to severe persecution. It was soon agreed that the secretary should accompany him on a visit to the valleys. On their return to Turin, Mr. Allen addressed a letter, containing the substance of his observations, to the Emperor of Russia. The British minister accompanied it by a note to the Duke of Wellington, and a special courier was despatched with the documents. The result was important to the poor Waldenses, as they obtained by this means some important privileges. The letter to Alexander was forwarded to him as soon as the courier arrived. The Emperor was out. On returning late at night he read it; Baron Wylie found him at two o'clock in the morning, sitting over it in tears.

Proceeding through Geneva,—where he met the Baron de Stael, and the Duke and Duchess de Broglie,—he passed on to Stuttgart, and obtained an interview with the

King of Wurtemberg, to whom he was introduced by the Emperor of Russia. 'My visit to the Waldenses,' he says, 'naturally opened the way for conversation upon toleration in matters of religion. I remarked, in substance, that the business of civil governors was the protection of the people in their rights and privileges, but that they had nothing to do in matters of religion, provided that the good order of the community was not disturbed.' Both the King and Queen fully assented to this doctrine. 'I had then,' he adds, 'under the influence of duty, to make some remarks on the subject of religion, which appeared to be felt; and we parted, I believe, under mutual feelings of Christian regard and affection. They cordially took me by the hand, and the King said, that if there was anything in which he could gratify me at Stuttgard, he should be glad to do it.' This audience occupied from an hour-and-a-half to two hours. From Stuttgard, after paying a brief visit to the Pastor Oberlin, at Waldbach, he proceeded to Paris, and thence home.

The *fourth* journey, in 1832, embraced Holland, Hanover, Prussia, and Hungary. The *fifth* and last, in 1833, included Spain and the Pyrenees. We say the last, because the continental tours of 1839 and 1840 were unimportant. In all these engagements, *facilities* were continually presented for exer-

cising influence. The Crown Prince of Prussia, the King of Bavaria, the Grand Duke and Duchess of Weimar, Prince Esterhazy, even the King and Queen of Spain, received him with cordiality, and expressed their willingness to forward his views. Everywhere he urged the rights of conscience, and pressed the importance of encouraging the formation of committees of pious and benevolent persons, to keep up a constant system of visiting the prisons, and reading the Holy Scriptures; laying it down as a great general principle, that measures for reclaiming could never be carried into full effect, but by persons who are themselves under the influence of Christian principle. Everywhere he sought to impress the advantages likely to result from the union of individuals in works of benevolence. A paper he drew up on this subject, when in Russia, embodies views at once sound and comprehensive, urges the beneficial influence which the higher ranks of society may exert in forming the minds and characters of the poor, and suggests the importance of creating and fostering a powerful and instructed middle class.

During the intervals which elapsed between these journeys, the ordinary employments of his busy life were pursued with the same intensity as ever. But they were now fre-

quently enlivened by visitors from foreign parts. His house was almost always the home of some pilgrim from afar. Having himself met with much kindness abroad, he conscientiously improved the many opportunities afforded in the metropolis for showing hospitality to the stranger. Francis Martin, of Bourdeaux, (now minister of the French church in London,)\* and Emilien Frossard, of Montauban; Charles Vernet, of Geneva, and Alexander D'Junkovsky, of St. Petersburg, all write to him with something like filial affection; delighting to call to mind his counsels, and congratulating themselves on having lived under his roof. With others whom he had known in distant lands he maintained a pleasant correspondence. Mariamne Vernet, of Geneva, a deeply-tried, but most excellent woman; her daughter, the Baroness de Stael; the family of M. Courtois, of Toulouse; and Professor Tholuck, of

\* During the 'hundred days,' this gentleman was working incessantly at Paris, in the establishment of schools of scriptural instruction, on the plan of the British and Foreign School Society. Napoleon had issued orders for such schools to be called into existence with all possible dispatch, and Mr. Martin was in the *bureau* of M. Carnot, both overcome with fatigue, when the news of the battle of Waterloo put a stop to their labours. The returning Bourbons had no sympathy with the movement.

Halle, all wrote to him, occasionally, as to a Christian friend.

In 1823, he lost his only child, and was deeply afflicted by the event. 'When thinking,' he says, 'of the probability of my dearest earthly treasure, in whom my tenderest affections were concentrated, being taken from me, I have prayed in an agony, and with many tears, that such a cup might pass from me; nevertheless, I dared only ask it in conformity with the Divine will.' When she died, he was enabled to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' The Princess Sophia Mestchersky, Prince Galitzin, and other friends, sent him, on this occasion, letters of condolence, which prove how near he was to the hearts of the pious writers.

## CHAP. V.

### ADVANCED LIFE.—SICKNESS AND DEATH.

WE must now approach the closing scenes of Mr. Allen's life and labours. The year 1842 saw him fast breaking up. In the month of September, 1839, he began to complain of a 'feeling of sinking and great weakness.' He notes, about the same time, that he had been overdone. 'My memory,' he says, 'is failing. I have noticed it for some time past.' 'I feel the infirmities of age coming on. Lord, prepare me to come to thee.' Twenty years before this (in 1819), meditating, on the banks of the Neva, upon the vanity of the world, his thoughts found utterance in these words: 'Oh, how little are all the pleasures and honours of the world, compared with the presence of the Redeemer and Comforter, when the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God!' Now, the world itself was receding, and the teachings of truth were about to be tested by the realities of eternity. *Then*, he had to complain of numberless occupations, of 'strong inward trials,' of '*imperfections staring*' him '*in the face every day.*' Now, he is privileged to speak of

‘retirement and sweet calm,’ with ‘praise and thanksgiving.’ *Then*, he had to pray, ‘Oh to be delivered from pride and self-seeking!’ ‘Oh for that state of mind in which I should not feel hurt if all the world slighted me!’ Still,—for grace seeketh more grace,—he is constrained to supplicate for ‘more humility,’ and to ‘wonder’ that he, so unworthy, ‘should feel peace in attempting publicly to advocate the Redeemer’s blessed cause.’

William Allen had now passed his seventieth year, and his declining strength compelled him to resign many of the public engagements in which he had so long delighted. But he could not be idle; and he wished to avoid the peevishness and querulousness too often incident to the latter years even of Christian people. He bethought himself, therefore, of the very best method for making old age lovely. He determined to cultivate the acquaintance of all the young persons within his reach, and had fixed evenings for their amusement and instruction. He notices with much satisfaction the success of this pleasant device for securing sunshine in all weathers.

A year more rolls on, and the death of his beloved niece, Eliza Bradshaw, who resided with him, again brings eternity very near. ‘I am now,’ he says, ‘much oftener than the re-



turning day, looking towards the end of all things here, and fervent prayers arise for an increase of faith and love. O Lord, make me and keep me thine, in time and in eternity. Strong cries ascend by night and day to our Advocate with the Father, through whose atoning sacrifice alone pardon and reconciliation can be experienced.' His beloved friend, Joseph John Gurney, hearing of his increasing weakness, writes to him in these terms: 'Thou hast been a kind and faithful father in the truth to me ; and *heartily* do I love thee. So long as memory lasts, I shall never forget thy kindness ; and sweet is the hope, that, deeply unworthy as I am of the least of the Lord's mercies, we shall spend an eternity together, in peace and joy unutterable. It is unspeakably precious to have this hope, and to know it to be as an anchor of our souls, sure and stedfast.' How speedily were these blessed hopes realized !

Though not now often heard in public ministry, there were still times when he was thus engaged ; and 'more than a few,' say his biographers, 'who were present at his last vocal prayer, at Stoke Newington Meeting, will long remember the solemnity with which it was accompanied. Amongst the fervent petitions which he offered in great brokenness of spirit on this occasion, were the following :

‘*Permit* us, O heavenly Father, we be-

seech Thee, to plead for the children of this people ; that Thou wouldest be pleased afresh to extend to them the visitations of Thy love. Draw them, and attract them to Thyself, make them Thy children : stain, we beseech Thee, in their view, all the attractions of this world. Preserve those that love Thee, through all ; and grant that, by Thy power, they may be kept from falling, and finally be presented faultless, before the throne of Thy glory, with exceeding joy.'

The 15th October, 1843, was the last time he attended meeting. In returning home he visited an invalid, with whom he conversed cheerfully ; and the day being very fine, he walked into his garden and field. He observed to his niece, Lucy Bradshaw, how particularly comfortable he felt, adding, 'I am afraid, my dear, we are almost *too happy*.' He spent much of the evening in reading, but the next day became very seriously indisposed, and, from his sudden prostration of strength, little hopes were entertained of his recovery. During his illness, affectionate consideration for those around him strikingly marked his character ; and though extreme weakness, at times, clouded his mental perceptions, humility and love were uniformly the *clothing* of his spirit. He enjoyed having the Scriptures read to him, and also the accounts of those who have fought the good fight ; and in speak-

ing of early Friends, he said, that he felt comforted in the hope of being one day united to all those worthies for ever. He afterwards added, with tears, 'Oh! how often I think of those gracious words of the Saviour, 'That they may *be with me*, where I-am!''

On the 30th of December, 1843, he fell asleep. As the moment of dissolution approached, a heavenly serenity settled on his countenance; and his hands, which had been raised in the attitude of prayer, gradually sank upon his bosom, as the redeemed spirit gently passed away.

We shall close by briefly adverting to two or three of William Allen's leading characteristics.

And the first thing that strikes us is, his *systematic and unwearied industry*. This was the secret of his success in life. It was not brilliant talent; it was not early advantages; it was not good fortune, that made him so useful and happy a man. It was *work*; patient and persevering toil, undertaken in the fear of God, and pursued steadily, under an abiding sense of duty. Mr. Allen wasted no time. He was moderate in diet and in sleep. He carefully gathered up, and appropriated, the crumbs of life which others fling under their tables. He always had work *at hand*; so that no one ever saw him loitering or *lingering*, in doubt as to what he should do

next. He must have had naturally a quick apprehension; and he early acquired the power of steadily fixing his attention on any given subject. All his *habits*, both personal and mental, were good. His knowledge was accurate and well arranged. In later life—the habit of constant occupation surviving the power of attention—he attempted much, and accomplished little. But this was his infirmity.

A second, and scarcely less prominent feature in his character, was *extreme simplicity*. The child's heart clung to him through life. At fifty-six he mourns the loss of a little Norwegian horse, with the unsophisticated sorrow of boyhood. 'Poor Pony,' he says, 'came up to me to-day to be caressed. I had hopes of his recovery, but in the evening my dear little grandson brought me word that he was dead. I felt low at the loss of this poor animal; it was a beautiful, affectionate, and useful creature; I never had occasion to strike it with a whip in my life. I hope not to repine, but really the things which I set my affections upon are taken from me in a remarkable way.' Sterne might have envied a sensibility so unaffected and sincere.

The third and crowning distinction in his character was *thorough disinterestedness*. The general unselfishness of his laborious life will not be disputed by any person capable of

understanding and appreciating Christian goodness. But one remarkable instance of his inflexibility in what he deemed to be right, and his disregard of pecuniary interests when their promotion involved a questionable course, ought not to be unnoticed. We refer to his grateful but firm refusal to accede to the urgent request of the Emperor Alexander, that he would undertake the supply of drugs for the Russian army. The Royal Society, in recording Mr. Allen's decease, felt it right to state this circumstance in their obituary, and to add, 'To his honour be it spoken, he resisted a temptation *the value of which it would be difficult to estimate.*'

His *piety* breathes in every page of the Memoirs. Tholuck, who spent some time with him in 1835, refers with beautiful humility to a little incident which occurred just before he left Mr. Allen's house, and which is too characteristic to be omitted. There was a large company present when Tholuck took leave. Instead of accompanying him to the door, Mr. Allen withdrew with him and Thomas Shillitoe into another room. Here they sat down together in silence, and had 'a sweet religious opportunity.' The two Friends addressed Tholuck in ministry, and they all felt it was a season ever to be remembered. Tholuck, referring to it in a letter to Mr. Allen, written after his arrival at home, says,

‘My dearest fatherly friend, I thank you once more for all; I thank you more especially for the last holy quarter of an hour; we shall find it again with its fruits in eternity. Oh, my heart pants for more communion with aged brethren from whom I can learn, by whom I can be edified! Here I am surrounded by hundreds, who want continually to receive from *me*.’ How beautiful it is to see the accomplished theologian thus sitting at the feet of an aged disciple of another communion! and what a testimony it bears to the piety of the man in whose house he had sojourned!

In the early part of his life, Mr. Allen was himself much influenced by this kind of private and personal ministry, peculiar, we believe, to the Society of Friends. Such communications were evidently regarded by him as, in a certain sense, authoritative. He speaks, in one place, of Samuel Emlen being ‘*commissioned* by the Great Master’ to say a word to him. In another, of Mary Stacey, after sitting for some time in silence, ‘ministering’ to him ‘as if she had been acquainted with the workings’ of his ‘mind:’ and he evidently receives her ‘*assurance*’ that God was dealing with him in love, as a message from heaven. On another of these occasions, the ministering Friend *predicts* his designation for service in the church; and again and

again are silent worshippers spoken of as receiving *sensible* manifestations of Divine favour, being 'baptized together,' 'overshadowed with a precious covering,' 'encircled in the arms of Divine love.'

Yet Mr. Allen was no visionary; nor was he in the slightest degree tinged with fanaticism. Speaking of a fire which took place at Plough Court, and in which the escape of the family and the preservation of the premises was, considering the nature of the accident, little short of a miracle; he only ventures to remark, 'It was got under, I trust I may say providentially, *though I felt myself unworthy of such a favour.*'

His views of Divine truth (we pass no judgment on his peculiarities as a Friend) were sober and scriptural. That they were evangelical is evident from the terms he uses in his diary, in relation to the merits, atonement, and justifying righteousness of Christ. Hence he rejoices in the declaratory minute made by the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends in 1829, stating that they can have no fellowship with any persons or bodies of persons who deny the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, and mentioning what those points are, 'in some of the strongest passages of Scripture relative to the Divinity and offices of the Redeemer.'

*His habitual spirit and temper, allowing of*

course for human infirmity, was humble and devout. He shrank from strife, as an uncongenial element, and considered that he had no call to mingle in the struggles of party. When attacked by the press, as he frequently was, he could defend himself with point and vigour; but he considered, as a general rule, that the best way to overcome a bad spirit in an opponent was to '*starve it out.*' Although much interested in public affairs, he was soon 'oppressed by politics,' and became 'increasingly convinced' that 'the less Friends mingle in the politics of the world the better.'

In attention to the spiritual welfare of his household, Mr. Allen, even in his busiest seasons, was most exemplary. He frequently speaks of the contrition, peace, or joy experienced by himself, or manifested by others, at these seasons. Far be it from us to doubt the reality of this blessedness. We greatly prefer vocal prayer, yet we cannot doubt that many of these silent meetings of the family, broken only by the reverential reading of the Holy Scriptures, were in deed and in truth 'times of refreshing from the Lord.' To all his dependents Mr. Allen was kind and attentive. Those who served him faithfully, he loved with paternal tenderness, and watched with parental care. Nor did his interest in them cease when they left his house. He

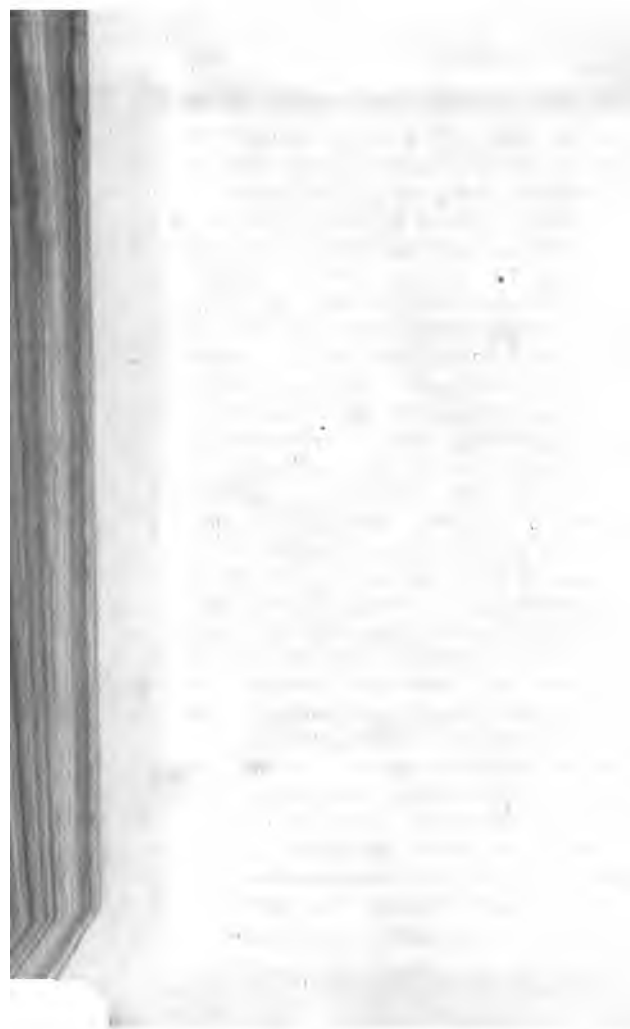


speaks of the discovery of an old servant of his mother's, who had been reduced to poverty by the misconduct of a brother, as almost providential. 'I was quite affected,' he says, 'and blamed her for not letting me know; for I was not aware that she was living.'

But we must conclude. There is one other point on which we should have liked to have said a few words, had not this article already extended to such an unreasonable length. We refer to the fact that Mr. Allen, acting on his principles as a Friend, undertook his journeys and other labours under the distinct impression of a *Divine call*. Whether he was always right, as to the character of these secret suggestions, may with some be matter of doubt. We are satisfied that he believed them to be from above; and we are sure that, whether agreeable to his inclinations, or involving painful sacrifice, they would have been equally regarded. At what point the strong conviction that a truth or a duty is given us from above is most likely to mingle with the whisperings of self-will or the desire of self-pleasing, it is always hard to determine. 'When the conscience is clear, when the man is lowly, when he has been subdued by discipline, the opposition (between the teachings of Heaven and self-exaltation) seems clear to him as between day and night; the delusion

of his own heart is manifested to him, by the light which God has kindled there. But amidst the noise of human applause, the distinction, once so definite, vanishes; the precious and the vile become hopelessly mingled.\* This, however, we will say: Woe to the man who imagines he has no call—no vocation given him of God! Woe to the man—a still deeper woe—who, *having a call*, thinks himself at liberty to deny or evade its claims, to falsify it, or to fritter it away! Let earnest and thoughtful young men think of these things, and ponder well their goings. If they doubt as to the promptings of duty, let them remember, in this, as in every other perplexity, that 'light is sown for the upright'—that 'before honour is humility'—that the path of lowliness is the path of safety, and the highway of wisdom, that which was trodden by Him of whom it is written, *He pleased not himself*.

\* Maurice on the Religions of the World.—Boyle Lectures.





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